Ozymandias Press

FREDERICK BARBAROSSA

Franz Kuhn

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Return of the Crusaders
- Frederick Ascends the Throne
- The Italian Campaigns
- The Mayence Festival and Tournament
- Life in the Castle
- The Third Crusade
- Conrad’s Victory in the Valley
- Raymond’s Heroic Ride
- Conrad’s Death
- Capture of the Brothers
- The Brothers’ Ordeal
- The Emperor to the Rescue
- Barbarossa’s Victory and Death

Return of the Crusaders

THE SECOND CRUSADE WAS ended. Exploits as heroic as those in the first Crusade, under Godfrey of Bouillon, had been performed, but no battles as glorious as those in the first had been fought. It was a difficult task to wrest Palestine from the domination of the Turks. Scarcely the tenth part of the stout champions who set out from the various provinces of France and Germany returned, and of this little remnant many were exhausted by marches, enfeebled by disease, and doomed to speedy death. Most of the castles resounded with lamentations over the death of their masters. Widows and orphans stood wringing their hands around catafalques in front of the altars in the castle chapels, as the chaplains prayed for the souls of the noble ones who had given their lives for the Christian religion in the far distant wastes of Asia.

Every province mourned its dead, for in many cases the people had lost their lord and protector, who had restrained cruelty and lawlessness. Even in cases where these masters had ruled with an iron hand and, in violation of their knightly and Christian duties, had maltreated their inferiors, there was no rejoicing over their death; for during the son's minority the guardian came into absolute control and might rob and plunder at will, while if there were no heir, the Emperor had the power to place a stranger over them. "It is better to cling to the old ways" was a German saying, even then.

Felseck was one of the few joyous castles. A great banner bearing the colors of its master waved from the loftiest turret. Armed servitors stood upon the ramparts and the guardians of his widely scattered possessions awaited his coming at the gates and portcullises. From the watchtower the warder scanned the plain, which stretched a long distance from the castle heights, watching with experienced eye every cloud of dust raised by each little passing troop. Many a time the heart of the warder, who had grown gray in faithful service to his master, beat more quickly as his keen glance recognized signs of an approaching company, and repeatedly he brushed away a

tear when he found himself deceived and saw the company riding off in another direction, or not displaying the colors of the house.

It was already past midday. Many a face was clouded with anxiety and suspense, and some even feared that the report of the safe return of the lord of the castle might be false, especially as so many reports had proved untrue. Rather than have their joy turn to bitter grief, it would have been less sorrowful tidings had they been told at once that Conrad of Feuchtwangen was no longer among the living. It would have been a crushing sorrow, but they could have submitted to the inevitable with more courage than if they had had to realize that the hope of his return, once aroused, must give place to life-long disappointment.

A cloud of dust appeared again, and the warder gave the signal. A solitary knight was seen riding swiftly toward the castle. His colors could not yet be made out, and the occupants of the castle, as well as the people round about who were awaiting the arrival of the lord of the manor, hovered between fear and hope. All watched the approaching stranger anxiously; many insisted they could distinguish the colors of the house, but others were in doubt. When it was certain that the former were right, then all were eager to know whether he brought joyous or sad tidings.

A trumpet signal was heard in the distance, to which the warder at once replied. This interchange of calls announced the approach of a friend of the house. Rushing forward to meet him, the people questioned the rider and begged for information. They followed after his sweating steed and exultantly surged forward to the castle gate. The nearer he came, the bigger and more clamorous grew the multitude, and long before the gates were opened to him, the people were confident he was the bearer of good tidings.

Then the castle halls resounded with joyful acclamations which could be restrained no longer, and which grew more exultant as another and louder flourish of the trumpet was heard from the watch-tower; all rushed out to extend their welcome, for, rapidly as the little band approached, it was all

too slow for the impatient throng. The broad plain was soon covered with the enthusiastic multitude. All were eager to witness the return of their good master to his ancestral halls after the performance of such glorious deeds in the face of such adverse circumstances.

Stout hands bore the consort of the returning knight in a litter at the front; and by her side were her two lovely, fair-haired boys, images of their father, who could not restrain their impatience and were doing their utmost to keep up. At last they met the returning knights. Conrad of Feuchtwangen quickly dismounted from his great war-horse, and in an instant his faithful Gertrude was in his arms.

The joy of seeing her lord once more overcame her, and she clung helplessly to the strong man who was again all her own after such long absence, and spared from the dreadful dangers to which he had been exposed daily and almost hourly. She had hardly recovered herself before she was greeted with passionate embraces and expressions of joy, which the boys also shared. Frightened at first by the stern, sun-browned face of their father and the pallor of their mother, they soon regained their courage. They clung to him and were loth to desist from hugging and kissing him and calling him the tenderest of endearing names. Universal joy prevailed, and tears of sympathy came to the eyes of many a bearded warrior at the sight of such happiness. Good wishes and the heartiest of welcomes were extended on all sides, and Knight Conrad cordially thanked all, both high and low.

When the first joyous outburst was over, they made their way to the castle. Gertrude mounted a beautiful snow-white palfrey; the boys were placed on their father’s war-horse, and supported by his strong arms they passed through the joyous multitude, who followed after them. The knight and his train entered the beautifully decorated castle halls, while the armed servitors and the people could hardly find room in the large courtyard. Evening came, but its cool air did not dampen the enthusiasm. The courtyard glowed with the light of torches illuminating the crowd, which was hilariously but harmlessly celebrating the occasion with the contents of the castle cellars. Within, in his high ancestral hall, Conrad sat with his family

and friends at a richly furnished table, and many a bumper of choice wine was drank in honor of the happy homecoming. At intervals the cheerful strains of lutes were heard, and the Minnesingers, inspired to do their best, sang many a long-drawn-out story of the heroic deeds of the old German heroes, in majestic verse.

“We have had enough, noble sirs,” at last said Conrad. “Thanks for your painstaking service. Now join us in celebrating this happy day. You must be weary.”

“Oh, my lord, how could we ever tire of relating the great deeds of our ancestors? Are they not the source of all the pleasures and sorrows of the present and future? Do they not inspire emulation of noble actions, and the exercise of knightly virtues?”

“Their remembrance is a treasure for all time,” said a knight of about the same age as Conrad, “but we have also witnessed exploits worthy of our ancestors, even if the outcome was not as fortunate.”

“Oh,” said Gertrude, and many joined in her request, “tell us of your exploits in the Holy Land among the Turkish hordes, even though it may temper our joy to hear the true account.”

“As you see,” replied the knight who was called Frederick of Swabia, “we do not return as numerous or as imposing as when we set out. It was then a goodly sight to look upon,—nigh seventy thousand heavily armored knights, not including foot-soldiers, riding to the Holy War. Hungary and Greece were astonished when they saw the array, and exulted over the certain destruction of the Turkish army. Oh, the treachery of these villains, who expected their deliverance at our hands and then placed almost insurmountable obstacles in our way! They overcharged us in the sale of supplies. Our hungry men were often obliged to procure subsistence by force when they were out of money. This occasioned many fatal quarrels, and we reached Asia Minor at last needy and sorely troubled. It was there our real misfortunes began, for the Greeks carried their knavery to the extreme. Sometimes when our army, which unfortunately had chosen the shorter but more dangerous route, arrived at cities, we were not allowed to enter. There

was no way of obtaining food except in baskets let down from the walls, for which extortionate prices were demanded. It was ‘Money, or your life!’ Often, when the money was sent up, the rope was not lowered again, and the unfortunate one, who perhaps had parted with his last penny, was only laughed at. Even when we obtained anything for our money it was wretched stuff, barely fit to eat, and sometimes poisoned. In some cases lime was found in the bread, which caused the death of several of our half-starved warriors.”

“Terrible!” cried Gertrude, shuddering at the thought of such suffering, “was that Christian-like?”

“The Greeks treated us even worse than the heathen Turks did, and it will always be remembered to their shame. Their guides purposely led us astray. More than once they disappeared at daybreak, when they were most needed. Once, to our great surprise, we found ourselves wellnigh delivered by those scoundrels into the hands of the Saracens. For Turkish gold they led us into an arid waste, where the Turks suddenly attacked us and, favored by the almost limitless stretch of level country, surrounded us and used their fatal skill at fence so dexterously that in a few days the greater part of the German army was sacrificed. Hardly the tenth part of it returned to Byzantium. We were among the fortunate ones, but our friendly reception at the hands of the Greek Emperor was poor compensation for our misfortunes. Shame upon the people of a country who would rather see their champions perish than aid them against a dangerous foe!

“Little grateful for this hospitality, we continued our retreat as soon as possible. At Nicea we met the French, who at the outset had as large a force as our own, and who had met with similar misfortunes. The most of them had been slaughtered by the Turks. An agreement was made to take the remainder to Antioch, whither the King of France had gone by vessel. Instead of keeping their word, however, the Greeks detained them in dark hovels, and left them a prey to hunger and disease.”

“Horrible!” exclaimed all.

“But true,” said Frederick. “Will you believe me when I tell you that thousands voluntarily surrendered to the Turks, for they expected and received better treatment from them than from those of their own faith?”

These dreadful revelations brought tears of sorrow to the eyes of Gertrude and many of the listeners.

“At last,” continued Frederick, “we reached Jerusalem, where also both sovereigns came. Reduced in numbers and half-starved as we were, we nevertheless ventured to besiege Damascus, but were baffled again by these Eastern Christians, who, in consideration of Turkish gold, helped the enemy and obstructed us.”

“So you see,” interrupted Conrad, “we came back rich in exploits, but not crowned with victory.”

“That is not our fault,” replied Frederick, “and yet it is not just to lay the blame upon Providence. It is just as unreasonable also to reproach the Abbe Bernard of Clairvaux, who advocated the Crusade, as to charge us with responsibility for the failure of the movement which he was certain would be successful. The highest human skill cannot avail against treachery. The grand work of rescuing the Holy Sepulchre will not succeed until all engaged in it are animated by Christian love and harmony, and work together for the common purpose, allowing nothing to divert them from its attainment.”

Frederick Ascends the Throne

THE GERMAN EMPIRE SUFFERED many grave calamities the following year. Henry, who already had been designated successor of Conrad III, suddenly died, and all hope of filling the vacancy on the throne without exciting dangerous quarrels among the princes and their adherents seemingly was gone. The seriousness of the situation was soon apparent. Two years passed, and no successor was found. Then the sudden death of Conrad occurred, causing great sorrow and even dismay in the German provinces; for he had been a good ruler, even though he had not always been successful in securing peace.

The situation was alarming. In Lombardy, on the other side of the Alps, the great and rich cities were struggling for absolute independence. Each of them demanded exclusive privileges and individual freedom. They refused to pay taxes or take commands from any one. Each sought to dominate the others and make them tributary. At one time they formed alliances to subjugate others, and when this was accomplished they turned against each other. One day in alliance with the Pope, the next with the Emperor, as soon as they were on good terms with each other,—which was not often the case,—they would join hands against both.

Every device was employed to prevent a lasting agreement between Church and State, and nothing gave them greater delight than the desperate conflict between the Emperor and the representative of Christ, when excommunications and edicts of outlawry were hurled from the respective thrones. They favored the one who would concede the most to them, though perhaps a few days before they had bitterly detested and harassed him. They pretended to submit to the victor, with the secret determination to throw off his yoke at the first opportunity. Indeed, in the very act of making an agreement, they were often planning to break it. Many a ruler had vainly exerted his utmost power to end this wretched business. After

the death of Conrad, Italian affairs were in almost inextricable confusion, and the German fatherland was in almost as desperate a condition, growing out of lust for power, and oppressive restrictions.

The grand dukes repeatedly defied the imperial power, and forcibly extorted from weak rulers privileges and immunities which they used for their own profit in dealing with their inferiors. Their vassals, the knights, were humiliated, deprived of all authority, robbed of their possessions, and even church and convent property did not escape spoliation. Many resorted to arms to defend their rights against the feudal lords, or indemnified themselves at the expense of the common people. The freedom of the latter grew continually less, and their humiliation greater. The regular taxes were increased and new ones were levied, until at last the peasant had little left but life. The industrious workers of the cities hardly ventured to carry their products to the nearest market without first purchasing protection from the nobles. Even then, they were often plundered by having to pay ransom to save themselves from being dragged to some dungeon.

This is but a feeble description of the wretched plight of the mightiest Empire in Christendom. To redress these evils and restore order required almost superhuman ability, and the princes looked around in vain for a deliverer. The haughty Henry the Lion, an aggressive, ambitious prince, had no one's confidence. Some were only solicitous to increase their personal power, while others lacked the ability to protect themselves successfully against any assailant.

The dying Conrad, however, took every precaution. He had experienced the difficulty of ruling such an Empire, and had decided upon the right man for the place. His own son Frederick was still a boy, and Conrad knew the Empire would not be safe in his hands. He proposed his nephew, Frederick of Swabia, whom we have already met. In a full assembly of the princes at Frankfort-on-the-Main, one praised the heroic courage he had displayed in the Crusade, another his judgment and wisdom, a third his knightly virtues, and a fourth was confident he would shortly put an end to the long and bloody conflicts of the Guelphs and Ghibellines. He was unanimously

elected, March 4, 1152. All the German provinces voluntarily and enthusiastically endorsed the choice of the princes, and a vast multitude of all classes and conditions exultantly greeted him when the coronation ceremony took place at Aix-la-Chapelle, on the tenth of the same month.

No complaint was made this time of irregularity in the election. Some slight regret was expressed that it had not been conducted publicly instead of in the Frankfort town-hall, but this was of little moment. The choice satisfied every one. All hoped to see the glorious old period of Charlemagne restored, and considered, it auspicious that the selection was made in a city which, according to tradition, owed its origin to that great hero of the olden time; for, when hard pressed by the Saxon heathen, it was there he discovered a ford across the Main, which saved his army, and near that spot he founded the city of Frankfort.

The coronation ceremonies at last were over, and the various popular entertainments gradually came to an end. The tumult of the crowds about the hall was hushed, and only two knights remained, who walked up and down the spacious apartment engaged in earnest conversation. The one, although only of medium stature, was strong and well made. His piercing glance, so terrible to an enemy on the battlefield, rested quietly upon his friend and helper. It was easy to recognize the new Emperor by his fair complexion, which the burning sun of Asia had but little browned, his blond hair, and his red beard. The other was Conrad of Feuchtwangen, his friend and comrade in arms at a time when deeds almost passing belief were performed.

“I know as well as thou, my dear Conrad, the magnitude of my task,” said the Emperor. “Whichever way I turn I find difficult problems, any one of which will require almost superhuman ability to solve. Germany and Italy, so widely separated from each other, are involved in desperate complications, but I feel that I have sufficient strength and courage to face the situation and fill my high position.

“The princes were certain of that when they elected thee.”

“With divine help I will prove myself worthy of their confidence. The history of our people shows that the man who is called to high duties, and places his reliance upon God, is a safe guide and protector of the people, and such an one often accomplishes important results in a short time. The incomparable Charles the Great (Charlemagne) united all classes of his people into a powerful whole, forced the most rebellious to recognize his authority, eradicated heathenism in a single generation, reformed the habits of the people by the glorious teachings of Christianity, and established a well-ordered Empire. At a later period, when princes failed to profit by what he had accomplished, when fraternal strife swept away the best and devastated the country, they suffered many years from the disgrace of it and bowed their necks under the yoke of the barbarous Magyars, until the matchless Henry came with all the old authority and the old virtues, and made the barbarians tremble at the very name of Germany.”

“How faithfully thou hast treasured in thy memory the actions of the great!”

“Yes, I have vowed that these men, but above all that Charles, the noble-hearted founder of German power, called ‘the Great’ by the world and ennobled by the Church, shall be my constant exemplar. The German authority shall again prevail, and the German Empire shall flourish again as in the days of old.”

“And yet, how many obstacles stand in the way of this achievement!”

“Charles also encountered obstacles, and certainly as great ones as these, but he finally overcame them. He found the most potent remedies for the evils of his time, and we must do the same for ours.”

“But the evils now are entirely different.”

“I think they are very similar. He was forced to break the power of the grand dukes and protect the common people, and that is what we must do.”

“The first task may be impossible, for it is extremely difficult to decide what the dukes have rightly inherited and what they

have usurped."

"In such cases we shall have to prevent any further increase of their power,—the remedy which Henry attempted to apply. The great cities with their industries and commerce, where the arts and sciences are cultivated more assiduously than in many knightly castles, must employ their wealth and power to curb insolence and punish offences against the laws. This will enable them to help each other and manage their own affairs. They certainly should know better what is for their welfare than those at a distance, who are ignorant of their circumstances."

"That will exercise an important influence upon the general welfare."

"True. The Emperor will find in every city a power already organized with which to punish those who now violate the law with impunity; because the law-enforcing power is so distant they can escape with their plunder behind protecting walls."

"But how about the people in the open country?"

"They, too, must have the protection of the law, and their actions must not be arbitrarily controlled."

"Excuse me, noble sire. The Italian cities manage their own affairs. The possessions claimed by the nobles were inherited from their ancestors. They associate freely with the common people, also, and yet these cities do not enjoy the blessings of freedom."

"That is true, but they mistake their real position and welfare. They dream of the glorious fame of ancient Rome, but they have not the slightest comprehension of its exalted virtues. Where will you find a Mucius, a Fabricius, or a Cincinnatus? But at every step you will find a Catiline, a Nero, or a Heliogabalus. 'Freedom for us, but none for others,' is the motto of the Lombardian cities, as it is of Rome. That is the cause of their decadence."

"And do you expect to maintain a powerful authority there?"

"With God's help, yes. I will curb their audacity, but will concede to them all their chartered rights. By demanding only

what belongs to the sovereign, protecting the weak against the strong, and firmly and judiciously administering the government, there may be a successful result."

"But have you considered what obstacles the temporal and spiritual powers may place in your way? Should the latter oppose you, you will find that bans and interdicts are dangerous and far reaching weapons."

"All honor to the princes of the Church who administer its sacred functions, but in all my relations with them the great Charles shall be my exemplar. Spiritual affairs shall be respected and protected, as they were by my great predecessor; but when unjustifiable encroachments are made upon imperial rights and privileges, I will resist them just as firmly as he did. Each must keep in his own place. I will take care not to interfere in spiritual matters when I have no right to do so."

"The union of spiritual and temporal authority has never been productive of good."

"For that very reason it is better for them to be separated. To the emperor, the sword; to the bishop, the Scriptures. If God helps me, and grants me the good fortune to win as sovereign such friends as I have as Frederick of Swabia, I shall not be uneasy."

Conrad knew what the Emperor meant. Honored by his confidence, he promised him anew his unchanging love and devotion. He pressed the extended hand of his royal friend and they separated.

Frederick had an opportunity that very year to demonstrate his authority. Two Danish princes, who were contending for the crown left by their father, appeared at the Diet at Merseburg and requested the Emperor to arbitrate their claims. Frederick decided Canute should be king and Sven should be indemnified with territorial possessions. His decision was particularly approved by the Germans, because it made Denmark once more a vassal of Germany.

Two years after this, in 1154, Frederick made his first journey to Rome, and but for a pestilence which broke out among his soldiers, would have permanently settled Italian affairs.

Returning to Germany, he exercised his authority as effectively as any of his predecessors had done. He summoned Archbishop Arnold, of Mayence, and the Count Palatine Hermann before him because of their bloody conflicts during his absence, through which several provinces had been devastated. They were powerful princes, but Frederick did not hesitate to punish them severely. A dog was fastened to the Count Palatine and his associates, and they were compelled to go a mile with it amid the derision of high and low. The same penalty was pronounced against the Archbishop, but was remitted in consideration of his position and age.) Soon after this, the Emperor mustered a strong force and destroyed the castles of the robber knights along the Rhine, who had plundered the fertile districts in their vicinity and rendered life insecure.

The German people joyfully listened to the accounts of these exploits. They were proud of their Emperor, and hope now rose in many a breast that all the burdens and misfortunes from which they had suffered would be speedily removed. The Emperor hastened from Reichstag to Reichstag, everywhere suggesting, reproving, and rewarding. He compelled King Boleslaus IV of Poland to recognize him as feudal lord and to make compensation to the children of his brother, Ladislaus; this resulted in taking Silesia from Poland and making it a separate duchy.

The power of the Empire steadily increased. Order and quiet were everywhere restored, the cities were prosperous and the people were happy and contented. Feared abroad, loved and honored at home, the Emperor was at the very summit of his power. In the Reichstag at Wurzburg (1157) representatives from Italy, France, Burgundy, Denmark, Spain, England, and Greece were present and paid homage to the German Emperor. The King of England was also conspicuous in displaying his good feeling, and sent costly gifts.

The Italian Campaigns

THERE WAS LITTLE SINCERITY in the protestations of loyalty which the Italian cities made to the Emperor; indeed their disrespect for him was soon openly displayed. Milan defied his authority with contemptuous arrogance. Tortoria, which had been destroyed by Frederick, was rebuilt under Milan's protection. The Milanese also demanded homage from Lodi and when that city refused to break faith with the Emperor, they advanced upon it in force, drove away its citizens, robbed them of their property, and demolished the city's walls. Complaints of these acts of violence were made to the Reichstag at Worms, and after the hearing it was decided to send an expedition to Italy for the punishment of the audacious rebels.

The expedition was considered all the more necessary because the Pope had taken sides against the Emperor, and his legate had declared before the Reichstag that the Emperor derived his authority from the Pope. This aroused the indignation of the German knights, who haughtily declared that the Emperor occupied a free throne given to him by the free choice of the German princes; that the Church was dependent upon the Empire; and that the latter would not permit any usurpation of its authority.

An armed force more numerous and better equipped than any previous one crossed the Alps. $$Frederick's army was composed of 100,000 foot and 15,000 horse. The Milanese this time appeared to be conciliatory, for, at the Emperor's summons, a delegation went to him and sought to justify their conduct. Their explanations, however, did not satisfy either the Emperor or the knights, still less the other Italian cities which had suffered. Milan was declared under the ban of the Empire, promptly besieged, and forced to surrender after making a gallant defence. It was compelled to take the oath of loyalty, give up its plunder, and promise to let its neighbors rest in peace. The Milanese were also ordered to build an imperial castle and send three hundred hostages to the Emperor's camp.

The nobles and dignitaries, barefooted and with halters about their necks, begged for clemency. Frederick decided that it was not enough merely to punish crimes already committed. Wisdom dictated precaution against their commission in future. He therefore summoned four of the most experienced law authorities and required them to investigate and settle what rights belonged to the Empire and what to the cities. He was willing to concede all the rights of the latter, but he demanded that the cities should take a solemn oath to respect the rights of the Empire.

Everything now appeared settled and most of the German princes returned home with their followers; but Frederick was anxious for the future, and remained in Italy to watch the progress of events. His fears were justified, for the wildest confusion soon prevailed. Milan, encouraged by the Emperor's complications with the Pope, secured the help of Crema and other cities, and the struggle began anew. Crema was besieged by Frederick, but made a stout defence. The dreadful struggle lasted seven months before Crema was forced to surrender. Abandoned by its citizens, it was sacked and then destroyed.

After obtaining reinforcements from Germany Frederick moved against Milan. The same barbarities which had marked the siege of Crema were repeated, and the Emperor could not prevent his troops from retaliating in kind.

He made a vow not to wear his crown again until Milan was destroyed. The Milanese well knew that he would carry out his pledge to the very letter. As the year drew near to its close they saw to their dismay that he was not withdrawing his army as was his usual custom at the approach of winter, and that the siege was to be continued. It lasted all winter, but on March 1, 1162, the exhausted city sent messengers to Frederick, tendering its submission and pleading for merciful treatment.

Frederick sternly replied, "I demand your unconditional surrender"; whereupon the supplicants abandoned themselves to their fate. Three hundred knights brought the keys of all the castles and gates, and thirty-six municipal banners were laid at his feet. All persons of rank took the oath of allegiance. The entire population of the city came barefooted into camp with

halters round their necks, ashes on their heads, and crosses in their hands, pleading for mercy. As the long procession was passing the Emperor, the state chariot, bearing the huge banner of the city adorned with the portrait of Saint Ambrose, was demolished, and the pride of Milan was humbled in the dust.

Wailing and wringing their hands, the people prostrated themselves, begging for mercy in the name of Christ. Every one wept. Even the stern faces of the German knights were moistened by tears; for the severity of the penalty, richly as it was merited, touched them. The Emperor alone remained unmoved. Milan's repeated acts of treachery, and its lust for power, required exemplary punishment.

"Your lives shall be spared," he said, "but the city, with the exception of the churches, shall be destroyed. Lodi, Cremona, Pavia, and Como shall perform the work, and you Milanese must find homes among these four cities."

Remonstrances and prayers alike were of no avail. The work of destruction began at once and the sister cities exultantly revenged themselves upon their haughty oppressor. Soon Milan was no more, and the other cities leagued with it voluntarily surrendered. They, too, were destroyed.

The Italian troubles were hardly ended when the presence of the Emperor was urgently demanded at home. There were quarrels and complications to be settled everywhere. He travelled all over the Empire. Now he was at Passau and Vienna, again at Cologne and Utrecht. From the Reichstags at Ulm and Laufen he hurried to the eastern frontier and quelled the Hungarian uprising. Soon after this he was at the Reichstags of Speier and Nuremberg, organizing another expedition against Italy. His representatives there unfortunately had failed to conciliate his conquered enemies. Their passion for revenge had smouldered like a spark in the ashes. Even without their once powerful leader, Milan, the larger cities had leagued themselves against the Emperor. Pavia alone remained loyal to him.

Frederick now devoted his entire attention to the restoration of order in the refractory cities, but his customary good fortune deserted him. A virulent pestilence quickly swept away a large

part of his army, and those who had been weakened by illness were exposed to the fierce attacks of the Lombardians, who, emboldened by this disaster among the Germans, seized all the mountain passes in hopes of capturing the Emperor. Secret flight was his only hope of escape. With his true friend Conrad and a little band of knights, he fortunately reached Savoy, and attempted to enter Germany by way of the mountains; but he was recognized by his enemies, who planned to murder him in the night. Their plot was discovered, however. After considering various ways of escape, a knight, Hermann of Siebeneich, who closely resembled the Emperor, offered to lie in his bed while Frederick made his escape. His enemies were not so inhuman as to punish the knight for his gallant act.

Greatly depressed but not disheartened, Frederick returned to Germany, where he found plenty to occupy his attention. Henry the Lion, Duke of Brunswick and Saxony, the most powerful prince next to the Emperor, was sorely oppressing his neighbors. All of them had suffered from his depredations, the Archbishops of Magdeburg and Bremen being the special objects of his hatred. Frederick quickly ended the trouble, however, and made all concerned promise to keep the peace.

In a Frederick undertook his fifth Italian expedition. At the outset, fortune seemed more propitious than before, but this was only an illusion. He realized that there was no hope of success without fresh reinforcements from Germany, and Conrad was sent to fetch them. The latter had often performed this errand, and knew the roads and all the dangers attending the task. He did not delay the faithful performance of his mission. Many of the bravest knights hastened to the assistance of the Emperor. Conrad brought both his sons with him, that they might have their first experience of war under the greatest princes of their time. That powerful Prince, Henry the Lion, however, was angry with the Emperor, although he had been his benefactor and had increased his possessions. He pretended he was too old for service.

As soon as his reinforcements arrived, Frederick resolved to risk all in one engagement. The Italians, who outnumbered his army, made a stand at Legnano. The fields were decked in their loveliest attire; the sky arched over the charming spot

like a pure crystal, and was reflected in the dancing ripples of the Ticino. It did not seem possible that deeds of slaughter and death could be committed upon such a beautiful May morning. The hosts on each side prepared for the fray. Frederick carefully disposed his troops and gave the signal for attack, he himself, as was his practice, leading the onset with desperate bravery. Right and left he drove the enemy before him. Here he rode with levelled spear straight against an entire troop, and there he smote with his mighty war-club, or clove the heads of the rebels with his two-edged sword, until blood flowed in streams. Conrad fought by his side with equal spirit, and with him his sons, who were inspired by the great examples before them. Notwithstanding their unflinching courage, however, they could not force the enemy to give up an inch of ground, although they hurled themselves again and again upon the very flower of the Italian army and fought like desperate giants.

The Germans, with their utmost efforts, made no progress. The Emperor and those about him seemed rooted to the spot where they stood. Where ten fell, twenty others immediately filled their places. Frederick's standard-bearer was felled by a terrible blow. The standard, emblem of victory, dropped, and the exultant shouts of the enemy followed its capture. Frederick grimly gnashed his teeth. He put spurs to his battle horse, and dashed forward to recover it. As the noble animal reared, its broad breast was pierced by a spear; a stream of blood gushed from the wound, and it fell under its master. The enemy swept over them like a great wave. Conrad, mindful of his duty as a vassal and brother-in-arms, rushed upon them like a lion, but he, too, disappeared as if into a grave.

When the standard fell, the Germans wavered. When they no longer saw the gleam of the Emperor's helmet and heard the exultant shouts of the enemy, they gave up all for lost. Their noblest and stoutest fighters either had fallen or were incapacitated for further resistance. They began to give way. The enemy charged them on all sides, and they were soon routed. Thousands were drowned in the Ticino, and thousands more were killed in retreat.

The Germans were in a lamentable plight, for they believed they had lost their Emperor. His devoted spouse, when she

heard the news of the disaster, clad herself in mourning and was inconsolable over her loss. The enemy were jubilant, for their most formidable foe was no more. Then came the news, which sounded like a romance, that the Emperor was living, and was safe and well in his faithful Pavia, to which city he had fought his way with his friend Conrad. Who can describe the change of feeling on both sides when this news was confirmed? To his faithful followers he was still their great leader and Emperor. To the enemy he was more an object of fear than a whole army.

As Frederick could not expect any further reinforcements from Germany, and the Lombardians feared to take part any longer in outside matters, an agreement was made for a six years' truce, to be followed by a treaty of peace. Concessions were granted on both sides. Each retained its own rights and respected those of the other. This was as satisfactory to the Emperor as a great victory would have been, for there was a divine spirit of compassion as well as of heroic courage in his nature. He did not love war, but when forced to make war he was a lion.

A sorrowful duty, which he could not shirk except at the risk of the disintegration of the Empire, awaited him at home. It will be remembered that Henry the Lion had refused service to him on the ground of age, and paid no heed to his earnest pleading for assistance. His excuse was a lie. He had shown, during the Emperor's absence, that he was not too old for war by harrying and attacking his neighbors. It was the Duke's disobedience and defiance which forced the Emperor to humble this insolent vassal. Besides this, the German princes also demanded the punishment of this disturber of their peace. Frederick would gladly have effected his purpose in some mild way, but it was impossible. Henry failed to appear before the Reichstag after being thrice summoned. The decision was then announced that he should be outlawed as a disobedient vassal and deprived of all his rights.

Thereupon, the lion-hearted Henry unsheathed his sword. He feared not the whole German Empire. He defeated small bodies of the army, but when the Emperor took the field the end came speedily. Subdued by the greater hero, he threw

himself at his feet. With tears in his eyes the Emperor was forced to execute the penalty; for they had been good friends, and until now there had been peace between the houses of Hohenstauffen and Welf. Henry retained only his hereditary possessions; his feudal tenure and rights were distributed among more faithful subjects, and he was banished from Germany for three years.

Thus, after years of warfare, the enemies of the Emperor were either destroyed or they wisely decided to submit to the stronger power.

The Mayence Festival and Tournament

PEACE NOW PREVAILED BOTH in Italy and Germany. Frederick regarded the remarkable prosperity of the Italian cities without envy, for it contributed greatly toward the prosperity of the German cities; and the German people did not withhold their gratitude to the Emperor for the good fortune they enjoyed. Frederick indeed was richly rewarded for his great achievements both in youth and manhood.

In recognition of this great prosperity, the Emperor organized a national festival upon a scale grander than had ever been known before. At Whitsuntide of 1184, princes, counts, and knights from all parts of Germany assembled by his invitation at Mayence, the seat of the highest spiritual princes, prelates, abbots, and priests. Strangers poured into the city in such numbers that they could hardly find accommodation. Upon the great plain before the gates a new city of tents quickly arose, where lodging could be obtained. The princes entered through the city gates splendidly mounted and with large retinues. The Archbishop of Cologne had over four thousand followers. If it was hardly possible to count the nobles and distinguished persons, how can the number of people who streamed in from everywhere be estimated? It was not so much the brilliant spectacle that drew these burghers and peasants to the city, as it was affection for the highest and most revered personage in the Empire, who had secured peace and prosperity for them. The joy of the Emperor was the joy of the people. It exalted the one and glorified the other. The streets of Mayence swarmed with people of all conditions. The fields were thronged by them, and the neighboring mountains loudly echoed their festive songs.

The Emperor entertained all the princes and nobles, the strangers and the people of the city for three days. An incredible amount of food was consumed, and wine flowed in streams. All were happy and satisfied, for every one found

something that contributed to his highest pleasure. Some regaled themselves at the abundant feasts, others admired the stately knights, the brilliancy of their armor, the beauty and strength of their steeds, while still others visited the various sports.

Along the tented city stretched a wide plain, surrounded by barriers, and in the midst an elevated dais decorated with gaily colored banners, splendid tapestries, and brilliant draperies. At early daybreak one morning people stood in crowds by the barriers, evidently awaiting a spectacle. As the sun rose, the crowds increased, and distinguished guests from far and near assembled on the dais.

At last the Emperor appeared, and received an enthusiastic and long-continued welcome from the people. In the open space, in sight of the exultant thousands, he knighted his two sons with his own hands, and then ordered the tournament to begin. The contestants in the feats of arms had already been waiting long. Their powerful battle horses, seeming to know what was impending, stamped impatiently and champed at their bits. Their shields, embellished with their crests and arms, hung upon columns. The heralds advanced and loudly and distinctly read the rules and regulations of the tournament, each one of which must be strictly observed. After sharply scrutinizing the weapons, helmets, and shields, and inquiring the name of each knight, the heralds announced, “All are qualified for the tournament.”

The barriers were then opened. The heralds stepped aside, two overseers entered, carrying long white staves, and behind them followed two knights splendidly mounted upon fiery, prancing steeds. They rode around the grounds at a quick gallop, and as they passed the dais their steeds stepped more proudly, the knights saluted the Emperor by lowering their lances, and then took positions at opposite sides of the barriers. After remaining there a short time, they couched their lances with the right hand, and holding high their shields with the left, put spurs to their horses and rushed at each other. They came together in the centre of the arena. Their shields rang from the impact of the lances, but neither of the knights was shaken. Changing positions, they rode around a second time and then

prepared for a fresh onset. It was plain that both were greatly excited. The spectators, who had been so enthusiastic, were now quiet, and looked on almost breathlessly as the overseers advanced near the spot where the knights would meet. The rush was swift and impetuous. One of the gallant knights wavered a little, but resolutely kept his place. Furiously they came together; a lance was shattered, and its bearer was hurled from his horse to the ground. The victor greeted the spectators, received his prize, and withdrew. The vanquished knight arose, and, to the delight of all, was found to be unhurt.

Two other contestants were announced with a flourish of trumpets, and their names were loudly called. There was instant and universal attention, for it was known that the two cherished an old grudge, and an open encounter between them had been prevented only by the Emperor's command. Would they settle their quarrel now? Easily handling their high-strung battle horses and testing their heavy lances with strong, skilful hands, they rode to their respective positions, while a messenger from the Emperor was conferring with the heralds and overseers. Many were apprehensive he might forbid the contest at the very instant the signal was given.

The knights were ready at once for the onset. The ground shook under the hoofs of the mighty steeds, and there came a fearful crash. Both lances struck the centres of the shields, but neither knight moved in his saddle. With a jerk they turned their horses around and rode back to their positions, savagely glaring at each other. Their steeds snorted as if excited by their masters' fury and seemed to know what was expected from them. Like two mighty billows rushing together the knights met the second time. The spectators eagerly watched their every movement. It was a frightful collision: first, a shock, then a crash like a thunderbolt tearing its way through dry branches. Both lances were shivered, the shields clashed together, and the horses ran against each other.

The next instant the stumps of the lances were flung away and the startled heralds and overseers sprang to one side. The broad, two-edged swords flew from the scabbards, and blow rapidly followed blow. The horses themselves seemed to know they were engaged in a life and death struggle, and instantly

obeyed the slightest signal of their riders. The contest between the evenly matched combatants lasted several minutes, as neither left himself exposed at any point or made any mistake in his sword play. Nor did their thirst for revenge affect their presence of mind or their caution. Blows felt with the rapidity of lightning and were as rapidly warded off. It seemed as if the contest would never end; but suddenly one of them dealt the other's horse a mighty blow which clove its head and killed the brave beast. In a trice its rider was on his feet, the other knight dismounted, and the fight was renewed on foot. Their shields had already crashed together and their swords were clashing with such force that the sparks flew, when the overseers advanced at the Emperor's command, shouting, and interposed their white staves as a signal that the contest must cease. The knights heard the order with ill-concealed indignation. They looked at each other for a moment, breathing hatred and revenge, but sheathed their swords before they were stained with blood.

Amid loud applause for their bravery they reluctantly left the arena and paid their homage to the Emperor. Their honorable recognition by the first knight of his time and his mild conciliatory advice to them exorcised the demon of hatred, and, once more reconciled, the strong, brave men, who had just been engaged in a death-struggle, embraced one another.

Life in the Castle

AFTER THE BATTLE AT Legnano, the Emperor's old friend Conrad, who had almost miraculously escaped every danger, returned to Castle Felseck. Those were sad days for him and his wife, for their two young heroes had fallen in the first battle for the Emperor. They did not complain, however, of their sorrowful bereavement. Their children had been taken from them in the very flower of their youth, but they made no public show of grief. The Emperor's companion-in-arms, formerly so active and impetuous, spent his time quietly in the desolate halls of his castle, and consequently had more time to look after the interests of his dependents than when every tumult of war called him away from his home. The fierce passion which used to flame in his eyes in camp and on the battlefield gave place to gentleness and compassion.

His wife, always a mother to every one of their dependents, a nurse for the sick, a consoler for the sorrowing, was now doubly eager to serve them for that bitter grief which only a mother can feel made her all the more sympathetic. Every day she went down the steep road from the castle to those lowly abodes where care and sorrow were usually the only guests. Her servants went with her, carrying food for the hungry and delicacies for the sick and infirm. She provided clothes for the needy, made by her own hands in her solitary hours. The two found their highest consolation in dispensing aid and happiness to all around them, for it is more blessed to give than to receive." The tears of gratitude and the hearty "God bless you," from those they assisted, richly repaid them. God, indeed, beheld their acts of mercy.

He, who is all goodness and love, was so pleased as they untiringly carried out His precepts and imitated His example, that He filled their hearts with the highest happiness. A few years after their bereavement He sent them two little sons, faithful likenesses of those they had lost. The first-born brothers lived again in them, and soon the traces of grief disappeared from Conrad's brow as the lovely little ones

embraced him, pulled his beard in childish wantonness, or ran their chubby little hands through his blond hair. Sometimes he would toss them upon his knees, after they had clambered up with a boisterousness that seemed like misbehavior, but was only their clumsy way of showing their affection. As soon as they were old enough it was their chief delight to play in the sunshine the livelong day, to frolic in the castle yard and the garden, to catch the brilliant butterflies, and pluck lovely flowers for welcome gifts to their mother. It was their delight also to visit the stalls where their father's battle horses were now resting undisturbed, mount his favorite steed, and imitate his exploits with the help of the groom.

During these years the castle grew more cheerful. Stranger knights often arrived and met with a hospitable welcome. Indeed, it had never been refused, but because of the family's trouble, they had rarely visited the knight. More and more frequently also his old friends —for he had no enemies near him—came to see him. Every one felt the highest esteem for this brave man who had all the knightly virtues. It was only those barbarous marauders who could not endure goodness, lofty purpose, and just conduct, whose strength was never used in defence of innocence but always for oppression and plunder, who shunned Felseck. As Conrad once more assumed the responsibilities of life he did not overlook the welfare of his dependents. His simple manner of life enabled him to fill his treasury with his savings, and he used them to help those who had been unfortunate and who could not meet their taxes or other obligations.

Conrad also looked strictly after the education of his boys. The mother sowed the seeds of virtue in their tender hearts, and awoke their reverence for God in their earliest youth. When they admired the beauty and diversity of the flowers, and the lovely hues of the butterflies, and questioned her with eager words about them, she told them of the creative power and the wisdom and goodness of the Almighty; of His care for all His creatures; of His boundless love for them, and of His delight in their welfare. She told them that the bright stars, upon which they gazed so wonderingly, and the happy life of the animals revealed His glory and His care, and that the birds always

praised Him in their songs. In this manner she aroused in their souls the sense of divine power and goodness.

Their father sought to cultivate their minds and impress them with the importance of the duties of life. He enriched their knowledge of nature. He explained to them what the relations of one human being to another should be, and told them that every one has his duties as well as his rights, and that while they had duties toward the animals, their highest and most sacred duties were to their fellowmen. He did not teach them to treat their inferiors as if they were hardly human—much less as barely deserving a share of the abundant mercies of the Almighty—but as divinely created and intended to rise to higher things. He taught them in the true Christian sense that all men are brothers—all children of God, the one Father, and that if He did not suffer all to have an equal share in His beneficence, if it happened that one had more than another, still each had what was necessary to his real happiness. He told them that even where one had more, it was often the cause of bitter sorrow to him, from which the one having less was spared. Thus there was compensation for all. He impressed it upon them also that it was wrong for men to make this disparity, which God permitted, still greater by robbery, force, or oppression, and that they should seek to equalize it so that the suffering caused by life's various misfortunes should be reduced as much as possible.

"We need each other in this world," said he one day to them; "and the poor, who have few desires, often need the rich less than the rich need them. What might happen to us if a powerful stranger knight should attack our castle and we were here alone? He would scale the walls with little exertion; he would murder, plunder, and burn until nothing was left. But suppose he should attempt it now! At one blast of the warder's horn my good servitors, whom I have protected when they were in trouble, would rush to our defence, drive off the assailants and send them home with broken heads. So it is all over the world. One is servant to the other, from the lowest menial to the Emperor, the first and highest person in the Empire. He cares alike for all, banishes all disturbers of the peace, decides justly, and makes laws which all must obey if

they wish to be happy. Whoever disturbs this order or violates the laws richly deserves punishment, for he is thereby destroying the happiness of others. Oh, if you had only been with me in that far-off land where force is the only law, where one obeys the will of one master to-day and of another to-morrow, you would have seen how miserable people can be, and have thanked God that you live in a land where all obey fixed laws, and where every one knows what he must do and what is expected of him. Even the Emperor himself cannot act entirely alone. He needs the help of others. He who would be a true knight must be ever mindful of his calling,—must protect innocence, resist enemies, and courageously maintain justice and support the law. Above all, he must keep untarnished the shield and escutcheon inherited from his ancestors, whose portraits upon the castle walls look down upon him and his deeds and judge him. By their self-sacrifice and faithful performance of duty they earned what all enjoy, and it would be criminally ungrateful were we to forsake the path of virtue they followed."

Such counsels as these still more deeply impressed the boys because the living examples of their truth were ever before them. They saw their father impartially awarding justice, protecting innocence, and rescuing the oppressed. When they gladly went with their mother to the homes of the needy and the abodes of the sick, and consoled them and distributed material comfort, the lessons of love and compassion were indelibly impressed upon their hearts.

With like eagerness and faithfulness they devoted themselves to exercises for the strengthening of the body, for their father once said to them: "He who would do good must not merely know how to do it but also be able. While one should love peace, he should also be ready for war, for not every one is peaceful." The boys devoted themselves with the utmost zeal to the use of arms and practised a certain number of hours a day under their father's or some trusted attendant's supervision. They ran, exercised on the bars, stretched their limbs, and strengthened themselves by severe tests. They travelled the woods in light clothing, paying no heed to storms, or winds, or the heat of the sun. They cooled

themselves in a forest brook, hardened themselves for the fatiguing exercise of the day, and returned home refreshed and invigorated. Then they practised hurling the light javelin at a mark, until they could use the heavy spear without straining themselves. They wielded the battle-axe, mace, club, and broadsword, as if they were giving the finishing blow to an adversary on the field. How delighted they were when they were allowed to mount the war-horse and practise the actual maneuvers of battle! They were strong and agile, hardened against the effects of weather, capable of great endurance, afraid of no dangers, strong in body and soul, and qualified for the performance of knightly duty.

During this peaceful period, which lasted several years, there was little opportunity to practise their attainments except in the pleasant but sometimes perilous chase, but soon knight Conrad's weapons were taken from the armory and the castle resounded to the tramp of armed men. Fate ordained that the old knight Barbarossa, who had spent nearly his whole life on the battlefield, should not die peacefully at home. From that far-distant Eastern land where in youth he and Conrad had fought for the Holy Sepulchre, suddenly came the evil tidings that Jerusalem, which had been in Christian possession eighty-eight years, had again been taken by the Sultan Saladin. Of all the conquests, which had cost so many lives, only Antioch and Tyre remained to the Christians. The Crescent was victorious everywhere, and persecutions were renewed, as in the period before Godfrey of Bouillon had rescued the country.

The complications between the Pope and the Emperor were settled at once. Frederick's old heroic spirit was aroused, and he looked forward to an expedition to the Holy Land as a fitting close to his life's work. At an assembly of princes held at Mayence a crusade was decided upon.

How could Conrad help joining it? Was he not the Emperor's brother-in-arms? Had they not once, amid disasters of every kind, sworn to fight together and to help each other to the last breath? Could he remain behind and rest at ease, while the Emperor, who was no younger than he, was in the field? No! To have stayed at home would have been a stain upon his escutcheon. He went with a force to Regensburg, the

rendezvous of the Crusaders, and by his side rode his two stalwart sons, barely twelve and thirteen years of age, but, notwithstanding their youth, exultant and eager to face any danger.

The Third Crusade

IT WILL BE REMEMBERED that the second Crusade, under Conrad III, was disastrous to the Christians in the Holy Land. The discords which everywhere prevailed and the wranglings and jealousies of Templars and Knights of Saint John were not unwelcome to the Turks. There appeared among the latter about that time the mighty hero, Saladin, of Kurdish origin.

He was sent with an army by the vizier Noureddin to Egypt, where he achieved such success as a leader that he made his preparations to dispute the sovereignty of that country with his master, but the latter's sudden death rendered his plans unnecessary. He became Sultan of Egypt and ruler of the whole country from Cairo to Aleppo, so that his possessions inclosed the kingdom of Jerusalem in a half circle. Such an enemy would have been dangerous to a much stronger city, and was all the more dangerous to the weak kingdom of Jerusalem because it could not rely upon concert of action for its defence. Individual leaders contended with their powerful enemy and performed deeds of heroism worthy to be compared with those of the first Crusade, but they were to no purpose. These warriors were glad when a truce was made, but they neglected during its continuance to prepare for the inevitable conflict. They even went so far as to provoke the enemy. Rainald of Chatillon, a Christian Knight, committed an audaciously violent act by robbing the Sultan's mother of her treasures while she was travelling through the Christians' possessions, and by killing her attendants; in revenge for which Saladin attacked him. The Christian army was routed in a single battle at Tiberias. Guy de Lusignan, King of Jerusalem and Grand Master of the Temple, and most of the knights were made prisoners, and the whole country fell into the hands of the Sultan. The crosses were torn from Christian churches; the emblems and vessels used in Christian service were carried away, and Moslems assembled for prayer in the Temple of Solomon.

The appeals of the Christians were heard in the West, and grew in intensity as the deeds of the Turks increased in cruelty. And yet it was Saladin's purpose to avoid carnage. His severest demand was that each man should pay ten gold pieces, each woman five, and each child one, for ransom. Forty days were allowed for payment, and when the time expired he magnanimously released two thousand Christians who could not procure the money, as well as all the prisoners; and besides this he divided nearly twenty thousand gold pieces among the enemy's poor and sick.

Notwithstanding such generosity, the old war spirit was aroused in Europe, as already related. Crusaders flocked from all sides to the army which the Emperor was organizing. Every possible precaution was taken to prevent another disaster. To rid the army of the rabble which had followed it before, and which had hindered and annoyed it and plundered at every opportunity, the Emperor ordered that no one should accompany it who could not show at least three silver marks. He also concluded agreements with Kilidj Arslan, Sultan of Iconium, King Bela of Hungary, and Isaac Angelus, the Emperor of Greece, and received their assurances of help.

Frederick's greatest anxiety was that peace and quiet should prevail in the Empire during his absence. To secure this he destroyed many more of the robber barons' castles while on the march, and issued an order that no one should begin hostile operations without giving three days' notice. Henry the Lion was banished three years longer and submitted to the penalty.

The expedition set out in imposing array for Regensburg, April 2, 1189, the festival of Saint George. Whitsuntide was celebrated at Presburg and in front of Gran the army awaited the arrival of the Hungarian King with his brilliant following. The Emperor reviewed his army before the city of Belgrade on the Hungarian frontier, and found he had about fifty thousand knights and an equal number of warriors of lower grades. Encouraged anew by fortune, which thus far had been so favorable, and relying upon the great strength of his army, Frederick prepared to lead his pilgrims to the Holy Land, confident that he would wrest it from the infidels this time and permanently restore it to the Christians.

We behold the Emperor Frederick seated in his tent in camp at Belgrade, with the most famous of his princes and those leaders of his army who were in his closest confidence. Among them is Conrad of Feuchtwangen, whose sons Raymond and Conrad are standing at a respectful distance, awaiting the Emperor's orders. Owing to the Emperor's affection for their father they have had the good fortune to be selected as his pages. After earnestly discussing the objects of the expedition and the best means of securing them, they begin to talk of the assistance they might expect from their allies.

"Let us wait," said the Emperor, "until our messengers return, and we learn what Isaac proposes to do."

"Do you not fear, your Majesty, that he will violate his word?" asked the Bishop of Mayence.

"What has happened once, or a thousand times, of course may happen now. But it seems to me our messengers will know definitely when they return."

"We shall know for certain if they bring no message of peace."

"In that case they would hurry back, I think, for that would clearly be their duty. I suspect the Greeks will prove faithless."

"It is almost certain," said the Bishop of Passau. "Greeks cannot keep faith."

"It is not yet absolutely certain," replied the Emperor, "and we must do nothing rashly. Still, I confess I am not over hopeful, for, alas, too often has the hatred between the members of the two Churches manifested itself and brought harm to both."

"Then let us attack at once," cried the young Duke of Swabia, Frederick's second son. "Let us fall upon them like a thunderbolt out of the clear sky, before they can make their preparations to help the Turks."

"Gently, my dear son," said the Emperor. "You are carried away by excitement. We can do nothing until we have actual proof of their perfidy. Your ungovernable zeal would make an enemy of our ally if he were not one already."

"He is our enemy," replied the Duke of Swabia. "My messenger who is at hand will tell you so. Tired of the long

delay, I despatched an alert and trusty friend to get some news of your messengers. His speedy return proves that my assertion is correct."

All present turned their eyes to the door of the tent and saw a rider in light armor dismounting from his panting steed. Coming into the tent, he announced:

"Isaac is faithless. Our messengers are chained in dungeons because the Emperor fears you are coming to take his empire from him. There is a multitude of his troops in the distance, who have followed me."

"His treachery is beyond all doubt," exclaimed several of the princes.

"Let us act accordingly," said the Emperor, with great seriousness. "As we have not been notified of the dissolution of the alliance, we will go to Constantinople and settle matters. So long as the people do not manifest open hostility to us we will treat them as friends, but at the same time keep in readiness to protect ourselves if we be attacked."

"Let me lead the vanguard," implored the Duke of Swabia.

"You are too young and hot-headed," said the Emperor. "There is double need for prudence and discretion in this emergency. Conrad, my old and tried friend, you shall lead. It will not be the first time you have been through the country, and you know the tricks which those people play at times, while pretending to be friends. You are cautious enough not to rush into unnecessary danger, and yet brave enough to protect yourself against any assault. Above all, I would fain not see Christian arrayed against Christian; but if it must be so, then we will clear the enemies of Christendom from the way with our good swords."

"I thank your Majesty," replied Conrad, "for this unexpected honor, which I hardly ventured to ask in the presence of so many noble princes, renowned for their valor and good judgment. I will ask but one favor. Allow my sons to go with me."

"It is granted. And now to our work."

The council of war was ended. The vanguard left at once, and the remainder of the army followed at intervals.

Conrad's belief in Isaac's treachery was confirmed at the very outset. He not only did not find the new bridges which should have been built, but the old ones had been purposely destroyed. The mountain passes were obstructed, and hordes of Bulgarians harassed the gallant little band on all sides with poisoned arrows. Several stragglers were killed, and one of the prisoners admitted that they had been employed and paid by Isaac for this shameful work.

Conrad at once changed his plans. He began hostile operations, and informed the Emperor of the condition of affairs. Philippopolis was found to be without a garrison and almost depopulated, $$Philippopolis is now the capital of Eastern Rumelia, which is a part of Bulgaria. It was named after Philip II of Macedon.") ?> but the Greek troops in its vicinity made no concealment of their hostility. Frequent encounters took place, in which the invaders were successful, and at last Isaac was forced to submit and release the messengers he had treacherously imprisoned; but he still remained hostile. The patriarch of Constantinople, indeed, stated in a sermon that any one who killed a hundred Germans should have absolution for ten murders.

The Emperor was infuriated by this. He fell upon the hypocritical knaves and scattered them in wild flight. Adrianople was easily taken, and Demotika surrendered to his son after the first assault.

Conrad, who was continually at the front, had the hardest tasks. The Greeks harassed him in great numbers, but never ventured to meet his little force, man to man. He and his Germans, who never seemed to weary, performed prodigies of valor, and his young sons had plenty of opportunity to show their knightly prowess. Upon one occasion they rushed to the defence of their father when he was hard pressed, and at another they hurled themselves upon the cowards and displayed the highest type of knightly gallantry. Victory followed the Crusaders everywhere. Isaac soon realized that he was no match for his adversary, and that, while the Greeks

were very courageous when shooting poisoned arrows at safe distances, they dared not face German swords. He abandoned his policy therefore, and a new agreement was made, for Frederick was anxious not to waste his strength and lose time. Isaac promised free passage and the necessary supplies, as well as transportation for the Crusaders over the Hellespont, and Frederick agreed to maintain discipline, so that none of the country people should be harmed.

It is little wonder, however, that after so many exhibitions of treachery the Crusaders had no confidence in the renewed alliance, and took unusual precautions. They rested after the day's hard exertions, partly mailed and with their weapons close at hand. They did not think themselves any too secure, even when surrounded by guards on all sides. If two or three of the Crusaders discussed any matter, they made sure that no Greeks were near, and war councils were always held in the most secret manner. The Emperor's confidants alone were acquainted with his plans. No one was trusted whose faithfulness had not been proved. This was not because there was any fear of traitors in the German army, but because a thoughtless person might let slip a word which would arouse the malice or excite the cunning of the enemy.

Their stay among these faithless people was a hard trial to the honest, high-minded German knights. It galled them to have to protect themselves against an ally as if he were an open enemy. If he only had been one or the other, friend or foe, they would have been better pleased. Hypocrisy was unknown wherever German speech was heard. They would rather suffer from honesty than profit from deceit in word or act.

The Greeks, on the contrary, were so thoroughly degenerate that they were found now on the one side, now on the other, as one or the other seemed to offer them the greater profit. Boasting their Christian orthodoxy, they persecuted with deadly hatred and sought to exterminate all who differed with them, so that they were as greatly detested in western Europe as the Turks themselves. Indeed, they were so blind as not to see that they were precipitating their own ruin when they, too weak by themselves to resist the enemy of Christendom, were obstructing those who were coming to its rescue.

It was impossible to convince either these unfortunate people or their leaders of the fate impending over them. For a long time already, indeed for centuries, they had been controlled and held together only by the absolute and rigorous sway of their masters. They were not content even with those mild and wise sovereigns who ruled by law. Indeed, most of these as well as the tyrants died violent deaths. Sons, urged on by intriguing friends, would dethrone their fathers. Incarcerations and cruel tortures were of common occurrence, and, as so often happens in this world, the very agency by which an undutiful son secured his elevation brought about his ruin.

How could any one keep faith in such a country? Craft and dishonesty were the only protection from harm. The person in authority was treacherously flattered so long as it was of advantage; when he could no longer subserve personal advantage he was forsaken, and the faithless friend became the most malignant of enemies. How could such a people, false to each other, be honest with strangers?

Such were the reasons for the continual distrust shown by the Germans, and their longing to leave the country. As soon as all the preparations for the crossing were completed they started for Asia, hoping to find more regard for honesty among the Turks, or at least to meet them as foes in the open field. The crossing occupied six days, and was made in Grecian vessels. Even at the last moment the Greeks did everything to obstruct it, and it was only the fear of force that restrained them from violating their agreement and attacking the German rear.

Conrad’s Victory in the Valley

AT LAST THE GERMANS reached the sacred land of Asia Minor. He who beholds it for the first time cannot fail to admire the surpassing beauty of the country. Winter, instead of destroying its luxurious vegetation, enriches the exceedingly fertile soil with refreshing rains. The numerous mountain ranges, which traverse that region in all directions, covered with majestic forests, present ever-changing spectacles of beauty. Blooming valleys stretch between them abundantly watered by clear and sparkling brooks. Groves of beautiful fruit-trees cover them in some places, and in others olive-trees delight the eye with their dark green foliage. Unusually large and brilliant poppies grow there and the cotton and corn fields yield abundant harvests. Between its numerous cities are pretty villages, which add to the natural beauty of the country. The stranger is impressed by the thought that life must be very enjoyable there; but those acquainted with the history of the people, while admiring all this beauty, only mourn that men should give way to their evil passions and change this paradise into a place of wretchedness and suffering.

“This blessed land,” said the Emperor Frederick, who was well versed in history, “has had stranger and more varied experiences than almost any other country on earth. Here once stood mighty Troy, which excelled its neighbor, Greece, in learning and the arts, until the folly of a prince’s son led the outraged Greeks to destroy it. Centuries later, there were many peoples here—among them the Mysians, Carians, Lycians, Paphlagonians, Bithynians, and Lydians,—the last the most powerful of all, and to whom all the rest were tributary, and whose king was the richest person on earth. But, happy? No! His wealth tempted Cyrus to invade the country, and its effeminate people were powerless to resist him. But Cyrus did not long enjoy his plunder; nor did Alexander, at a later period. After the latter’s time, the country was split up into

petty kingdoms, which fell into the hands of the Romans, one after another being subjugated more or less easily, as the King and people were cowardly or warlike. The innumerable ruins which everywhere meet the eye are mute witnesses of the dreadful experiences of this land. Those wretched hovels cover the spot where once stood famous Ephesus with its splendid temple of Diana. The ancient Nicomedia, residence of Roman emperors after Diocletian's time, is to-day an insignificant place. Of many other famous places hardly a trace can now be found.

"Where Christianity in its early stages enjoyed its greatest prosperity, where the most famous and the greatest of its communities lived and transformed the land into a garden, the Turk now rules and persecutes Christians with fierce hatred and sharp swords, thanks to the cowardliness and faithlessness of the Greek Emperor and his people."

The sad story of desolation which the Emperor briefly outlined to his listeners made a sorrowful impression upon them, but it also awakened the sense of duty in their brave souls; and a feeling of gratitude that they were called upon to rescue and redeem this land filled the hearts of the brave champions of the Cross. They even hoped that the Sultan of Iconium, as the country was then called, would prove faithless, like Isaac, for then they could act regardless of him, and victory would be assured. This singular wish, which was natural enough at that time, when knights were ever eager to encounter new dangers, was soon gratified. Kilidj Arslan proved as faithless as Isaac.

Conrad of Feuchtwangen, leader of the vanguard, encountered Turkish troops at the very outset. As soon as he entered the mountain region he was harassed on all sides by swift, alert horsemen. Every grove and hill concealed them. As the Germans approached they dashed out, brandishing their scymitars or shooting arrows at them. Strong bands suddenly attacked them in ravines and narrow passes, and when the Germans attempted to resist in regular battle order, they disappeared like the wind in all directions. It was impossible for the heavily mailed knights to follow them or to force them to make a stand. Although the attacks were not very disastrous, as the scymitars made no impression upon the mail

and arrows glanced off from it, yet stragglers fell easy victims to the Turks. Many were suddenly killed, and there was no one near to avenge them. Under such circumstances the stoutest grew uneasy, even though there were no actual hand-to-hand encounters. There was no time to rest, for the enemy was active both day and night. Subsistence began to fail, and hunger and thirst, the Turks' best allies, threatened to claim the Crusaders for their victims.

Thus matters continued day after day, and each morning brought more enemies, weakened their own numbers, and increased the need of subsistence. The Turks destroyed everything they could not take with them, and filled up or polluted the wells. The scanty supplies furnished by the Greeks were insufficient for the main army, and nothing reached the vanguard from that source.

It was hard to believe these were the same Crusaders who presented such a brilliant spectacle in camp at Belgrade. Wan and worn they sat upon their emaciated steeds, which dragged themselves forward like farm horses. The hopelessness of the situation was depicted upon every face. Their once glittering arms were stained and rusted from lack of care, for all their leisure was spent in searching for roots and herbs to satisfy the cravings of hunger. Thousands succumbed to their hardships, but the German knights made no complaint. The influence of their training was apparent. Accustomed from boyhood to strenuous exertions they rendered splendid service on this expedition.

From a lofty mountain ridge Conrad surveyed his little band. Hardships troubled him little; but when he looked upon his sons, who had been so full of hope, whose robust health was impaired, and whose rosy cheeks were now pale, it nearly broke his heart. When they noticed the tears in his eyes and inquired the cause, he regained composure by a strong effort, to show them they must still keep up courage.

Indeed, there was little time for brooding over misfortunes, as the Turks were assailing them on all sides. There lay the beautiful valley flooded with sunshine, far as the eye could reach. The fields were luxuriant with verdure, and a plashing

brook sparkled in the sunlight. They beheld an abundance which they could not enjoy. Suddenly the Turks rushed up the slope like sand driven before the wind. Fear seized the knights, but they summoned up courage and resolved either to conquer or die. If they could only gain a half-hour in which to appease the pangs of hunger and quench their thirst with the cool waters of the brook, they would die, if they must, or they would fight with renewed strength, even though the legions of hell were on the enemy's side.

They prepared to meet the attack without command or the need of encouragement from their leader. They raised their shields with tired hands, grasped their lances, and stood in orderly array, awaiting the onset. The Turks delayed, but their desperate purpose did not escape the experienced eyes of the knights; their numbers continually increased and still the attack was delayed. The knights grew impatient, but at a sudden signal from Conrad the entire band swept down the slope like the whirlwind. The front ranks of the enemy were shattered and gave way. Steeds and their riders were piled in heaps. Nothing could withstand the Germans. They dashed into the thickest of the fight, unmindful of dead or dying, and exchanging their lances for the terrible battle-axe, they rained blows upon the Turks, death following every stroke. It was a terrible harvest of death in that small area. The Turks were appalled by the sudden attack. They now recognized their own danger, and advanced upon the Christians with all the bravery of their race, and the skill and adroitness of their methods of fighting. The storm of arrows, which struck upon the knights' mail, unceasingly but uselessly, was discontinued, for it injured more friends than enemies. They engaged their foes man to man, with their sharp scymitars, and tried to perforate the grooves of the mail; but the Christians still had the advantage, for they mowed them down with swords and war-clubs before the Turks could make use of their shorter weapons. Still the latter swarmed about the little band like ants.

With the swiftness of the tiger they would leap upon their enemies, cling to them and seek to pierce the mail where it was weakest; but with equal swiftness the Christians drew

their daggers and used them with dreadful effectiveness. Hundreds of the enemy were killed; others, badly wounded, sought safety in flight, and riderless steeds were rushing about the mountain side in numbers, and yet there seemed to be no decrease in the numbers of the enemy.

Resting for a moment, Conrad anxiously scanned his little band. He was solicitous for the safety of his sons, who, because of their light armor, were more exposed than the knights. He saw them in the very thick of the fight, in turns attacking the enemy and protecting each other. A number of fallen Turks showed that the boys were doing their duty. Conrad noticed that Raymond was mounted on a magnificent Arab courser and that, while he was in great danger, he was making a successful fight. A gleam of satisfaction lit up his face, but it was only temporary, for almost in an instant it changed to deadly apprehension.

A Turk, noticing his apparent forgetfulness of the battle, rushed swiftly at him, seized him in his powerful arms, and held him as in a vice. Pressing his heels against the horse's flanks, he sought to drag Conrad off, in hopes he would be trampled under the animal's hoofs. But Conrad sat as immovably as if rider and steed were one, trying to use his dagger, for his arms were pinioned. His enemy could easily have killed him with his own weapons, but he sought to dispose of him in another way. Slightly unloosing his hold the Turk tried to drag him aside, so that he might hurl him into an abyss; but, notwithstanding all his exertions, he could not accomplish it. Though old and wellnigh exhausted, Conrad had sufficient presence of mind to improve every advantage and to save his strength.

The Turk now had to consider the danger to which he himself was exposed in bringing the struggle to a close. His cries attracted the attention of the knights. Warding off blows on every hand, a young Christian champion made his way through the enemy, dashing over the fallen at the imminent risk of his life. A skilfully directed blow severed one of the Turk's arms, and a second stretched him upon the earth, howling with pain and rage. It was Conrad's eldest son, whose

heroic act had saved his father's life. They exchanged grateful looks of satisfaction, and then side by side engaged the foe.

The Turks soon realized the hopelessness of their efforts. Half of them lay dead or wounded, and the other half were exhausted with their efforts to make some impression upon the knights' mail, while the Christians still confronted them with unimpaired strength. Soon German reinforcements were seen approaching, which inspired hopes of victory. The Turks were still making a furious fight, when a sudden shrill cry from their leader changed the aspect of the situation. The Turks instantly disengaged themselves from the enemy, and wheeling their swift steeds about, rushed down the mountain side, and quickly disappeared. The Christians watched them as if dazed. It was like waking from a dreadful dream. They could hardly trust their senses or believe their leader when he told them the battle was over and the enemy had fled; but when he pointed to the other side of the valley and they saw the riders vanishing away like ghosts, they were convinced of their glorious victory.

Their first act was one of thanksgiving to God. Then they hurried to the valley as rapidly as they could to seek refreshment. Their tired steeds could hardly make their way, and many a knight dismounted and led his horse by the bridle, choosing rather to suffer himself a little longer than forsake his battle-companion.

The little band exulted when they reached the valley. The refreshing water strengthened man and beast. The fruits of that genial climate satisfied hunger, and the luxuriant grass was enjoyed by the exhausted animals. Conrad advised them to exercise wise moderation, for he knew from experience that over-indulgence after severe exertion was injurious and might have dangerous results in that climate.

The eventful day at last drew to a close, and all felt invigorated by food and drink. Cooling baths had revived their strength, and after a few hours of sleep they hoped to be able to withstand anything the next day. They now made their arrangements for rest. A comfortable spot in an olive grove

where they could easily protect themselves was picked out and sentinels were stationed. Conrad, however, was very anxious.

“We are safe here for the time,” said he, “but the enemy will again appear with reinforcements to drive us from this blessed valley, for they well know that its abundant product is our only salvation. We are too weak to hold it for ourselves and our approaching comrades, who are now suffering from hunger and thirst, while we are relieved.”

“They ought to hurry forward as fast as their strength will allow,” said one.

“A messenger should be despatched to inform the Emperor.”

“But whom can we afford to send? Whom would you deprive of this night’s needed rest and send into danger?” said Conrad.

The knight made no reply.

“Send me, dear father,” implored Raymond. “I am not so weary that I cannot make the effort.”

“Do not send the boy! The errand is more dangerous than he imagines. If no one else will go, I will,” said the former speaker.

“Oh, no, no!” said Raymond. “I am no longer a boy. I can take care of myself. Spare your tired bones, for you are no longer the youngest, and my strength is sufficient.”

“I do not dispute that. Who could, after seeing the many deeds you have performed?”

“Then assign me to the duty.”

“It is all the more dangerous because of the strength required. Even if you had a giant’s strength it might be of no avail. You must remember that the enemy are swarming about us on all sides. They are hovering between us and the army, like birds of prey, seeking to swoop down upon their victims. Foresight and skill, cunning and shrewdness, alone can avail, and only one whose steed can equal the speed of their horses may hope to escape unharmed.”

“That I can do better than any of the rest of you,” said Raymond. “You are not aware that I have captured a Turkish

horse, one of those incomparable coursers. Having lighter armor than the rest of you, I can surely go without danger."

"That is fortunate. It almost seems as if the Divine Hand were pointing the way to the accomplishment of our wishes," said Conrad. "I have no objection, and assign you to this difficult task. But be wary and alert. Delay not a moment. Let not weariness overcome you, and be not deceived by the quiet around you. It is only the noble lion who openly seeks his prey; the bloodthirsty tiger lies in wait for the approach of its unsuspecting victim. So it is with our enemies. When you reach the camp, hasten to the Emperor's tent, and if you have to rouse him from sleep, do so, and urge haste upon him and the army. If that is of no avail, then tell them of this valley. Tell them they will find an end to their privations here and they will long for wings to fly hither. Now depart with God's blessing, and may He go with you."

A hearty embrace followed these words. The boy went out, mounted his horse, and flew across the valley like the wind. The last rays of the setting sun gilded the mountain tops, and those in the valley saw the young hero riding as if in a blaze of golden glory, and waving his hand to them in greeting, as he disappeared behind the heights. The little band were soon sleeping, all save the sentinels, who noiselessly paced their rounds, listening and watching for any suspicious sound or object.

Raymond’s Heroic Ride

OUR YOUNG HERO RODE with a stout heart. His steed showed itself a worthy representative of the splendid Arab breed. The waves of a gently flowing stream could not have borne him more easily. His horse’s hoofs hardly disturbed the soil. It glided with the swiftness of the wind or the swallow, rather than ran, and was so perfectly trained that it obeyed the slightest touch upon its shoulder or pull upon the bridle. It never needed the spur and yet the rider, as the noble animal sped along with flying mane and distended nostrils, making the sparks and gravel fly, knew that it could make still greater speed, should that be necessary.

Raymond rode at this speed for nearly an hour. The night was very dark and so still that only the echoes of his horse’s hoof-beats were heard among the neighboring hills as he flew at a swift trot through the ravines and passes. At times he heard the cry of the hungry jackals in the dense forest, but no other sounds reached his ears.

Thus in the silent solitude of the forest, far from friends but perhaps close to lurking enemies, our hero said good-bye to his youthful days almost before he had entered upon them, and boldly took up the work of manhood. He knew nothing of that silly fear which arises from the imagination. However or wherever he might encounter an enemy, he determined to show his knighthood if that enemy met him manfully. The possibility of defeat never occurred to him. He felt himself under divine protection. He believed, as his comrades did, that this war against the Turks was well-pleasing to God, and that all engaged in it were under His special protection, for had not God been with them thus far in all their troubles? Had He not already guided Conrad wellnigh to the accomplishment of his purpose? Since the honor of bringing that purpose to completion had been assigned to him, surely God would guide him also and bring him to success.

With such uplifting thoughts his soul was filled as he rode rapidly on, watching carefully all about him lest he should be surprised by some unseen danger. His road now lay between two walls of rock, which loudly echoed the clatter of his horse's hoofs. The stony ground made the slightest sound audible. It was one of those spots which the Turks had defended so obstinately and which the Christians had taken in their recent gallant attack. While thinking of the possibility that the enemy might be lying in wait upon the mountain sides, if not for him then for the army, and that the outlet of the pass might be blocked, a slight tremor, but not of fear, seized him as he heard a sharp whiz through the air and a sudden blow upon his armor, which he at once knew was caused by an arrow. Like a flash he touched his steed's flank. The Arab bounded, gave a loud snort, and then flew like the storm-wind. Stooping a little in his saddle, Raymond glanced up the heights. He thought he saw dark figures gliding about who had delayed attacking him in their uncertainty whether he was friend or foe.

There was a great difference between the hoof-beats of the Arab and those of the Crusaders' horses. Misled by this and by their inability to see distinctly in the thick darkness, the Turks lost an easy victim. But Raymond was not yet out of danger. He heard individual calls, which the echoes repeated over and over again. It was clear they came from outposts warning those in the distance of his approach. He still further increased his speed, for delay now was dangerous, thinking that by swifter flight he might reach the end of the pass before the Turks could oppose him in force. While he was still some distance from it, the moon rose and shed its faint lustre upon the mountain sides, making his enemies look like ghosts. As he urged his horse to its utmost speed, that he might not be an easy mark, the ravine was suddenly illuminated with moonlight, and directly ahead of him a faint streak of light appeared. It was the outlet of the pass and beyond it the open country was flooded with the radiance of the moon. With thankful heart he looked up to heaven, gently patted his noble horse, which, seeming to understand the meaning of his caresses, shook its mane, tossed its head, and bounded along exultantly.

Imagine Raymond's feelings, however, when he espied two dark figures at the outlet of the pass whom he instantly recognized as Turkish horsemen. His good lance was levelled at once, ready for a strong thrust with his right hand, while his left held his shield before his breast. He rushed upon them at a furious gallop with the intention of running down the one on the right, at the same time protecting himself against the other with his shield. He had hardly formed his plan when a skilfully aimed arrow hit his shield and fell to the earth. His practised eye saw that it came from the right side. All that he had now to fear was the other enemy with his keen scymitar. He must dispose of him before the archer had time to place another arrow. In an instant he was upon him, ran his lance into his breast and threw him from his horse. The animal struggled and pranced about so furiously that the archer was confused and his arrow flew wide of its mark. The prospect of victory encouraged our young hero. Emboldened by the success of his first onset, and expecting to be attacked at any instant by the enemy in his rear, he swiftly turned, levelled his lance, and rushed upon his enemy. The Turk was ready for the attack, but as he had no means of protecting himself against the thrust of the lance, he dodged aside. The lance struck a tree near by with such force that it was broken in two. The Turk's eyes glistened with fiendish delight like those of a hyena. He swung his scymitar above Raymond's head with the intention of severing it at a blow. The Turk's dexterity with this weapon made the situation extremely dangerous for our friend. He seized his shattered lance, however, and hurled it with such force that it averted the scymitar from its course and knocked his enemy's turban off. The Turk was furious with rage, but Raymond was cool. He drew his sword and like a flash smote the Turk's uncovered head. A dark stream of blood gushed forth, and a muttered "Giaour " escaped from his lips, as he fell from his steed dead.

Raymond now fully realized the danger of the position he had been in, and his victory seemed almost miraculous. Alarmed by his experience and dreading new dangers, he urged his horse to swifter flight. Danger was more imminent on those broad moonlit plains; for his enemies, who had been swarming round him in the mountains, would certainly betake

themselves to the open country as a more favorable spot for their operations and more likely to result in his capture, as their horses were fresh and well fed. The cowardly thought of avoiding battle, however and whenever it might come, never occurred to him; indeed, for an instant, he was inclined to halt and face his pursuers. His better judgment, however, told him this would be a mistake, for in that case he might fail to accomplish his purpose of reaching the army and delivering his message. He reflected that the lives of thousands hung upon his success, and among these thousands was the noble Emperor and hero, the flower of chivalry. So he still rushed on, for horse and rider were unwearied.

Two hours later they skirted a dark forest, shadowed by a mountain range, the last he would have to cross, for upon its other side were the army's outposts, and thence the road led straight to the Emperor's camp. The road here was not so rough as that where he had made such a fortunate escape. It wound through gently rolling foot-hills, and was seldom stony, the most of it being covered with a soft, springy turf, upon which his horse's hoofs made but little noise. While his progress was easier and swifter, still it was to be taken into account that horsemen could approach him on every side and that his pursuers had no obstacles in their way.

The nature of the locality made it more difficult to find the way in some places than it was in the mountain region, where the wild torrents which dashed from the rocks in the rainy season left dry beds which could be used as pathways. The dense foliage of the trees also hardly allowed the moonlight to penetrate it, and more than once Raymond was in doubt whether he was on the right road. He tried other directions several times but this invariably made his horse restless and ungovernable. At last he decided to let it take its own way, for he was well aware that the horse is often the surest guide. The noble animal must have travelled that way many times while he himself was going over it for the first time, and besides this he had but little time to study his way. Stroking his horse, who had already become very dear to him, as if to compensate him for the injustice done to his sagacity, he let him choose his own way. As it no longer seemed necessary to make such great

haste he rode more quietly and found by the position of the moon, which at times peeped through openings in the trees, that he was now riding in the right direction to reach the end of his journey.

As Raymond slowly climbed the heights and grew calmer, he almost forgot all dangers, for he felt he was near his friends and supposed that his wearied enemies would not risk a near approach to their still formidable opponents in the camp by daylight. He actually imagined that he saw the white tents of the Christians glistening in the moonlight, where treeless vistas admitted an open view. His heart leaped for joy as he reflected that he was bringing consolation and encouragement to so many thousands, and a tear stood in his eyes as he thought of their suffering and fancied the joyful impression his news would make. He pursued his way almost carelessly. He was nearing the end of his journey and gave little heed to his surroundings. It is not singular, therefore, that he was alarmed by a sudden noise. Looking back he saw that he was followed. He thought that three horsemen, riding furiously, were seeking to overtake him, hoping to capture him by surprise rather than by attack.

Raymond slackened his pace an instant to ascertain the real nature of his danger and the best means of avoiding it. It was impossible for him to make a successful resistance, for even should he escape their arrows he must have a hand-to-hand contest, one against three, and give up as soon as he was surrounded by them. He was all the more helpless against numbers as he had lost his lance and had only his sword for protection. Flight was his only alternative, and he felt sure that once out of arrow-shot he would escape.

Throwing his shield across his back he urged his horse to its greatest speed. It shot away like an arrow. The hanging boughs of the trees often brushed his face and he repeatedly crashed through thickets of dense bushes, which snapped and broke. It was like the magic wild hunt for the slender, swift stag of the forest, so quiet were the hoof-beats. Notwithstanding all the efforts of his noble steed he gained no advantage over his pursuers. In an incredibly short time they approached him at the foot of the range. Raymond could see no trace of the camp,

not even a sentry. Had he been deceived when he thought he saw the tents? Were his friends still farther away than he had supposed? What if his pursuers should be taking different routes to head him off? Looking around with hasty glance he noticed that only two were now following him. He had been carefully instructed by his father not to act upon guesswork but to have a fixed course always in view for an emergency. He decided to give battle only as a last resort, but he was determined that two of them should die before he lost his life. Saying to himself "With God's help, I will win," he rode on.

He soon realized that the distance between himself and his pursuers was lessening. One of the latter must have noticed it also, for he had taken his bow and was holding an arrow in his right hand. Raymond felt a terrible apprehension that he might be killed almost at the goal he was striving to reach. The road now turned a little to the left and caution was still more necessary. An arrow grazed his face. Had his horse made its last step an instant sooner or an inch farther, he might have fallen and been trampled upon. He had hardly time to realize this, however, when a Turk with fiercely gleaming eyes rode out of the thickets. Swinging his scymitar he confronted Raymond, who met him with his sword. The horses came together at such furious speed that the Turk was thrown, and Raymond's steed came down upon his knees. He was down for an instant only, for his rider helped him to his feet with a stout pull and he at once dashed on, while the Turk's horse was panting and snorting, evidently as much enraged as his master, who sent curses after Raymond as he rode along exultantly.

Suddenly a halberdier confronted him. His horse stopped so quickly that Raymond was nearly thrown. It was a foot-soldier of the Emperor's army and at his call several others came up. How grateful that call in the dear mother tongue sounded! His only thought was, "Saved, saved." He made himself known, pointed to his enemies, who shot their arrows and shouted curses at them, and then took themselves off.

Raymond explained to the outposts the nature of his mission in a few words. Then he inquired the shortest way to the Emperor's tent, and as he hurried on his way to it the warriors' eyes beamed with joy and their lips uttered thanksgivings.

Raymond's message was received with general exultation. The warriors rushed up to him, caressed and kissed him, and could hardly find words to express their joy. Weariness and despondency vanished. The shout, "Forward, forward," resounded everywhere. After hearing Raymond's report, to the great delight of all, the Emperor issued the order to move. Tents were struck at once, and the advance, led by Raymond, plunged into the darkness of the forest, while the rest followed as eagerly as if on the way to some richly appointed banquet.

Though the fresh night air lessened their fatigue somewhat, it was still very great. The tired soldiers, little refreshed by their short sleep, dragged themselves along with much effort. It was so dark they could not distinguish the rough places in the road. Their weary feet continually slipped and those on foot repeatedly fell, while horses stumbled over roots of trees and other obstacles. The farther they went the more unmistakable were the evidences that the Turks were aware of their movements and were on the alert themselves. Those in the advance had to look out for themselves as best they could, but even after the utmost precautions many horses were badly wounded and some of the poorly protected foot-soldiers were killed.

The real fighting began when the first valley was reached. The knights fought with all their remaining strength, and many a Turk, brought to bay, was slain. They entered the narrow pass, where Raymond had made his victorious fight, with grave apprehensions. The Turks in small bands disputed every inch of the ground with dogged pertinacity, while others concealed behind rocks and thickets, sent showers of arrows into their ranks. The knights in the advance protected themselves with their shields; but the arrows fell like hail into the dense mass of those behind them, and it was only here and there that they escaped injury by holding their halberds obliquely. Most of the arrows, however, reached the mark only too surely. They hugged the rocky walls upon which the enemy were standing, as closely as possible, and held up broken branches for their protection. Many of those who neglected such precautions were wounded.

As morning dawned increased, for now they were clearly exposed to the assaults of the continually increasing enemy. Many of the Christians wrung their hands in despair, bewailed their apparent fate, and implored God to save them. Just as the last hope of rescue seemed to vanish, a band of the enemy suddenly halted in their front and appeared to be making a hurried inspection of the mountain sides. Almost immediately they rode at full speed to the outlet of the pass and disappeared. The Crusaders were astonished by this movement, and feared some new trick on the enemy's part; but Raymond joyfully assured them they were nearing the end, and that assistance was certainly on the way. His assurances revived their hopes. They advanced at a quicker pace, and had hardly gone a hundred yards before they found the Turks in battle with the Germans. At a sign from their leader the knights in front levelled their lances and charged upon the enemy, who, finding themselves assailed on two sides, gave way at the first onset. The exhausted warriors exulted when they saw them in flight, and a moment later father and son were in each other's arms; for it was Conrad who had come to the rescue. After consultation between the leaders it was decided to keep at a safe distance until they had time to rest, after which they would consult the Emperor and decide upon their future operations. When told of the dangers to which the Crusaders were exposed in that mountain region, Conrad determined to send a force, as soon as all were rested, and clear it of the enemy.

My young readers already know the impression which that beautiful valley made upon the vanguard. It was all the greater upon the army, whose joy was boundless. Troop after troop poured out of the pass. The wide plain was soon crowded with the entire German force. The banks of the stream were densely lined with horses and men, and it was a long time before the last of the army emerged. Finally the Emperor appeared, surrounded by the bravest of his army. He had personally directed every movement for the protection of his men, and refused to rest until the last one had safely reached the valley. Enthusiastic shouts of welcome greeted them, which the mountains re-echoed, announcing to the Turks that the courage of the Christian host was still unbroken.

Gnashing their teeth with rage, the Turks disappeared like ghostly shadows among the mountains which separated the two armies.

Conrad’s Death

THE INTENTION OF FREDERICK’S faithless allies to destroy his army by hunger rather than by the sword was frustrated by the indefatigable exertions of the Germans. Though greatly reduced in numbers, they had thwarted every device of cunning and hatred, and though menaced by continually increasing numbers, had reached the region they had hoped for—a region where no German foot had ever trodden before. They found everything there which they needed, and even more, for the enemy had not been able to carry it away or destroy it.

Frederick, who had accurately divined the plans of the enemy, only allowed his army to take so much rest as was absolutely needed, for his foes behind the mountains were increasing their strength every day. All the princes approved of the Emperor’s policy to advance at the earliest moment and overcome the enemy, and not to take a long rest until it became indispensable.

Conrad again led the advance, and this time the Emperor’s son, Frederick of Swabia, like his noble father, a true type of German chivalry, accompanied him. The army followed on foot. The advance approached the open country on the other side of the grandly swelling hills unmolested, and there the knights made their first stand against the Turks, who confronted them in dense masses. It was then the German knights showed their prowess. With levelled lances they charged into the close ranks of the enemy, dashed them to the earth in heaps, then with lightning-like swiftness exchanged lance for sword and battle-axe, with which they fought so furiously that all who could make their escape fled shrieking and howling. The onset made room for those in the rear, and the base of the hills soon swarmed with Christians, who fiercely attacked the Turks at a swift gallop and drove them back with broken heads.

The battle, which lasted nearly all day, showed that the Turks had been surprised by the Christians before all their preparations were completed; for as evening came on, the Christians beheld large dark masses of troops coming from the distance to strengthen the enemy. Every one realized that a great battle was impending on the following day, and all eagerly awaited it. The Christians gradually and steadily advanced, in accordance with the Emperor's orders, while the enemy's force fell back to support their approaching reinforcements and gain more room for their cavalry.

Frederick and the princes realized that they must meet a formidable foe. His orders for the disposition of his forces showed great skill and experience. The superior numbers of the enemy, which were continually increasing, and the fact that the ground was specially favorable to the latter, particularly to their cavalry, called for the highest skill and most persistent courage on the part of the Christians. On the other side, in the rear of the enemy, lay a rich fertile region, for the protection of which they would exhaust their resources in order not to crowd upon their neighbor, the Sultan Saladin, who might be willing enough to help them, but who would not, under any circumstances, be disposed to share the country with them if they were defeated. The only alternatives for the Christians were victory or death; for behind them was a malignant, perfidious people, who had harassed and plundered them when they were victorious. What, then, might they expect, if they were defeated, disarmed, and exhausted? Battle was inevitable, and all were certain it must be a life-and-death struggle.

On the evening of May thirteen, the Emperor held another council of war; preparations for the struggle were thoroughly discussed. Nothing was over looked, and every one was asked for his opinion. As soon as the plans had been settled upon and it was decided to attack in the morning, all betook themselves to rest.

Morning dawned after a short, cool May night. The first faint streaks of light were barely visible when the outposts noticed a great bustle in the enemy's camp. As soon as Conrad was informed of it he ordered Raymond to carry the news to the

Emperor's tent. Raymond found the Emperor already busily making his preparations. After a hurried observation of the enemy he ordered that attack should be made as quickly as possible. The camp was at once astir. Noiselessly, but with astonishing rapidity, the eagerly expected commands were executed, the various divisions led by the princes and the nobles were massed, and messengers hurried in all directions conveying the orders of the Emperor, who meanwhile mounted his battle-horse in full armor and rode to the front with Raymond. Cheers greeted the grizzled old hero faring forth to battle as fresh and vigorous as in the days of his youthful strength. Victory shone in his eyes and declared itself in his general bearing. The faintest-hearted must have been emboldened by his look. The enemy in the meantime were busily engaged with their own preparations.

The German army steadily advanced upon the Turks, who at first fell back without striking a blow. Nevertheless, there were real encounters, for here and there small groups of the enemy would come within arrow shot, kill some Christians, and then swiftly retreat, and avoid pursuit. Many believed the Turks were repeating their old game, and that either they did not intend to make a stand or they were luring them on to some favorable spot where they could make an attack from every side.

The leaders watched these movements very carefully, giving especial attention to the enemy's wings to prevent themselves from being surrounded. These tactics lasted for some hours, and during that time the two armies were often so near to each other that battle seemed inevitable. The Christians were eager for it, but found no opportunity to attack, for whenever they made anything resembling an offensive move, the Turks scattered like chaff. The Emperor, who kept in the front, repeatedly ordered an attack, but before a sword could be drawn the enemy would fly in every direction and render it useless.

This style of fighting was repugnant to the Germans and the German nature. They were accustomed to look an enemy in the eye, meet him valiantly, and not retreat. This useless expenditure of strength, this wearisome effort to force the

Turks into an engagement enraged them, and they determined to make an end of it. As a large body of Turks came near, the Emperor loudly cried, “Why delay longer to purchase the heavenly kingdom with our blood? Christ commands! Christ triumphs!” With these words he dashed into the densest of the enemy’s ranks, taking them by surprise. They waved their scymitars, with loud cries of “Allah!” The battle had begun, Frederick fighting like a lion in the midst of the constantly increasing enemy. The mailed giants hurled themselves upon the Turks with all their force, and the fight soon raged all along the line. Here the Turks swarmed around a troop of German knights, and there single knights fought against superior numbers, who strove in vain to break through their steel mail. Arrows whizzed through the air; battle-axes and clubs crashed down. The fight was furious on both sides; where the German foot-soldiers were engaged, the Turks were most successful, for being unprotected by armor, the former were slain by arrows. But when the full-armed knights, the flower of the army, were encountered, their assailants fell, never to rise again.

The noonday sun flamed down so fiercely upon the knights that their armor glowed with heat and their faces were bathed in perspiration. Some were hardly able to raise their weapons. They no longer sought the enemy, being satisfied to repel him when attacked. The German ranks were already thinned, but their losses were not so great as the enemy’s.

The Germans, after almost endless exertions, succeeded in forcing the enemy back, and looked upon a field covered with slain. They also heard loud wailings and lamentations for the dead, which inspired them with fresh courage. The Turks fiercely disputed every foot of ground, and every step gained was dearly paid for. It was apparent that the enemy either were unwearied or else that they were frequently reinforced, for each fresh attack was stoutly resisted. Seemingly it would have been an endless battle had not night stopped the slaughter. As the sun went down, its intense heat lessened, but heated passions did not cool. The whole field resounded with shouts of “Allah!” and “Christ!” The Germans succeeded in driving the enemy before them. As the latter fell back they

defended themselves step by step, but as the darkness fell they suddenly abandoned the struggle and disappeared.

The Emperor wisely and emphatically forbade pursuit. The knights stood by their panting horses and wiped the sweat from their brows, while the foot-soldiers gathered about their leaders. They distrusted the enemy for a long time and held themselves in readiness to repulse one of those subtle attacks which were so characteristic of the Turks. When the spies, however, reported that they could find no trace of them, Frederick gave orders to pitch the tents. Every one sought food and drink, the first requisites after a hard battle. As soon as all were satisfied, they searched for the wounded, of whom there were not many thus far; partly because almost every scymitar blow had been fatal, and partly because the heat hastened the death of the severely wounded. Those who could rest by the side of their own friends and comrades-in-arms were fortunate. Among these was Conrad of Feuchtwangen, who held both his sons in his arms, while they in turn embraced him and murmured prayers of thankfulness to God for protecting him. Then the weary ones slumbered, gathering fresh strength for new victories, of which their souls dreamed while their bodies rested from their strenuous exertions.

With the first beams of the rising sun, the Turks renewed their operations by approaching the Christians and daring them to battle. The latter advanced more quickly than on the previous day so as not again to waste their strength, and also to force the enemy back more speedily. The entire plain was covered with the combatants. It seemed like some great thoroughfare upon which one crowd was advancing and the other retiring. Only here and there did they come together. Except in such spots, the two movements were continuous and in a southerly direction. The Christians imagined that the enemy made this move so as to reach the extreme frontier of the kingdom of Iconium and meet the approaching Egyptian troops, and then jointly attack. The Emperor himself at last came to this opinion. He regarded it as possible, although he failed to understand why the enemy on the day before had made such sacrifices when there was no prospect of victory. Nevertheless, he completed his preparations to attack the united forces, and,

if God so willed, to crush them at a blow, and thus all the more quickly accomplish the object of the expedition.

The Turks, indeed, made little resistance all that day, and many were so credulous as to believe they would disappear again as they did on the preceding day; but toward evening they again rallied in force, apparently to make a vigorous attack. The Christians were at once in readiness to meet them. The princes headed the knights, with levelled lances. Conrad, with his large retinue, did the same, and like a terrible thunder storm in a dark night they hurled themselves upon the enemy. The latter's dense mass was riven in twain as if by a lightning stroke, and a fearful hand-to-hand encounter ensued. Lances were soon exchanged for battle-axes and war-clubs, and these in turn for swords. The Christians strove to overcome the superior numbers of the enemy by separating them so as to attack them in detached groups, and the plan succeeded. Every knight was engaged with three or four or more of the enemy, handjars and sabres flashed in the air, and many a one, who up to this time had escaped fatal assault, fell lifeless in sight of his comrades, and his blood mingled with that of his foe. Conrad and his sons, who as yet were safe, fought like lions against overpowering numbers, but Raymond was suddenly wounded in the arm by a blow from a scymitar. In his anxiety for him, Conrad for a moment neglected his own safety, and as he turned to help his son, he received a terrible cut in the neck. At the same instant Raymond's sword descended with all the strength of his wounded arm upon the head of the Turk, who fell dead from his horse. Raymond's sword, however, dropped from his hand, and he found himself unable to protect his father or himself amid a swarm of bloodthirsty Turks. But help was at hand, for the Emperor had led his forces to a glorious victory. Those of the enemy who were not disabled fled before the lions, who shook their manes in furious rage and looked about them for more victims.

With tears in their eyes the two youths stood by the side of their dying father. They had laid their dear one under a great oak tree, which extended its branches over him like protecting arms, and sought to stanch his wound. The sight bitterly grieved the Emperor as he approached. He had found the steed

and shield of his old comrade-in-arms, and well knew what he had lost; but the spot showed clearly what his life had cost the enemy, for the shield was covered with blood and a wall of slain lay beside it. He at once ordered that his brave friend should be taken to his own tent and cared for as such a friend deserved.

“Were it possible to purchase thy life, thou faithful one, I would give this day’s honor,” said the Emperor, with great emotion.

“Thanks, my noble sovereign, for thy true friendship, which accompanies me even to the grave,” said Conrad; “but I feel I shall not long enjoy it. Death steadily approaches, and my life swiftly nears its close. But it would be a great consolation in my dying hour to know that my sons will be cared for. I brought them here in the morning of their life that they might see how brave knights can die for God and their Emperor. I think I myself have set them the best example—I can do no more. Take them when I am gone.”

“I will care for them,” said the Emperor, “as if they were my own sons, and they shall always be near me. I pledge my life for them as freely and as courageously as thou hast pledged thine for me.”

The dying Conrad cast a look of gratitude upon the Emperor, then turned to his sons, pressed their hands to his heart with all his remaining strength, and said:

“Be worthy of your ancestors your whole life long—turn not a step from the path—of virtue—true to your Emperor to—the last breath—to innocence a—protector—to evil-doers and blasphemers—an avenging judge—and—I die willingly.”

Thus Conrad of Feuchtwangen passed away. All were in tears. Even the Emperor’s eyes were moist. At last he ordered that the body should be buried with the highest honors, and that Raymond and Conrad should follow him to his tent and stay with him in future.

Capture of the Brothers

THE BROTHERS PASSED A sorrowful and sleepless night. Though they felt greatly honored by the Emperor's protection, they would rather have grown to manhood under their father's eyes, learned their highest duties from his lips, and, inspired by his example, have reached his lofty standard of honor. They fervently prayed for strength to face the inevitable, but no rest came to their tired bodies. Raymond suffered pain in his wounded arm, and Conrad, who was greatly overcome by his own exertions and by the loss of his father, was even more greatly troubled by the fear that he might lose his brother also and be left utterly alone.

The morning found them still disturbed by their sad thoughts. There was great activity in the camp. The Emperor had decided to move at once, attack the enemy wherever they were found, and destroy them or force them to make peace, whatever the cost. The army therefore quickly advanced. The brothers remained in the camp, the elder because he was incapacitated for active work, and the younger to look after his brother, according to what the Emperor said, but in reality because he did not wish to expose one so young to the possible dangers ahead of them. An old henchman, grown gray in the Emperor's service, was assigned to look after the brothers and advise with them whenever necessary. As soon as all these matters were settled, the Emperor set out in pursuit of the enemy.

On the third day, as on previous days, the Turks adopted their customary tactics, but the Christians by this time had gained confidence by the success of their attacks and knew how to follow them up. The horses which had been captured were very useful to the Christian knights, as their own half-starved animals had a chance to rest. Thus they were in excellent condition to execute their plan and from every point of view were ready for battle. Shortly, they neared the capital of Iconium. They beheld it in the distance about noon, and felt that their hardest battle was imminent; and so it proved. The

Turks occupied a better position than on the previous days, and put forth every exertion to beat back the Christians. By their peculiar tactics, as well as by their superiority in numbers, they occasionally succeeded in forcing back detachments of the knights, so that they crowded upon the camp.

At last the Turks in overwhelming force directed an attack upon the spot where the Emperor and the bravest of his knights were fighting, for they knew the battle must be decided there. Thousands of scymitars flashed about the heads of the little Christian band and glanced off from shields and mail. Hundreds fell victims to German steel, but fresh fighters took their places as if they sprang from the earth to avenge the slain. The slaughter was appalling, for at every blow of the Germans' heavy two-edged swords, death followed. But at last the stoutest arms began to tire and the bravest hearts to weaken; for notwithstanding all this sanguinary work the numbers of the enemy apparently were not reduced. A brief rest was absolutely necessary and the Emperor granted it. The knights halted for rest in vain, however, for the enemy, elated by their seeming victory, rushed forward and the Christians were forced back toward their camp. The brothers, unprepared for battle, were suddenly surrounded in the melee and were in imminent danger of capture. Their critical position appealed to the heroic soul of the old Barbarossa, and he determined to give battle anew. In thunder tones he shouted to his knights: "Comrades-in-arms, help to defend my protégés. Let me not be guilty of breaking faith with the dying!" The next instant he fell upon the enemy, followed by his faithful knights. Nothing could withstand them. They charged as the hurricane sweeps through the forest. Again the enemy divided up and made isolated attacks, here and there with success; but the Christians did not waver.

"No more retreating!" was the cry. "Christ commands!" they shouted, and "Christ triumphs!" was the answering cry.

The Emperor's bold example inspired all. They not only held their ground, but forced the enemy to give way. As their courage rose that of the enemy proportionately weakened. They realized more and more that all the advantages they

might secure could not compensate them for the loss they must suffer. The irregular hordes of cavalry, which had been harassing the Christians from motives of pure hatred, saw they had been deceived. They expected to overcome them with ease, but for every dead Christian there were hosts of dead Turks. The Sultan himself discovered that his plans had come to naught, and rather than sacrifice his subjects for the benefit of an ambitious neighbor, he decided simply to defend his city until peace was made. Finding that the Turks were falling back on all sides, Kilidj Arslan ordered a hasty retreat. His warriors were so glad that they fled precipitately. Inspired afresh by this new victory the Christians rapidly pursued them, and evening found them at the gates of Iconium and in possession of much rich booty which the enemy had abandoned.

The Emperor allowed but a few hours of rest, for he had decided to storm the city while yet the hearts of the knights beat high with victory and before the enemy could make the necessary preparations for defence. Everything was made ready in the gray of twilight, and at break of day the general assault began. The enemy, who imagined they alone excelled in swift movements, found themselves outdone. Surprised by the unexpected attack, some of them became panic-stricken, but the most of them, who were only accustomed to fighting in the open country, could not stand confinement within city walls. Troops of cavalry rode helplessly up and down the streets, seeking some way of escape and finding none. Desperate over the possibility of a Christian victory, the foot-soldiers fought upon the walls. The Germans in the lead, bold as lions, climbed the scaling ladders in spite of all obstacles. Descending the walls, they plunged into the very thick of the enemy, shouting, “Christ triumphs!” and piled the streets with Turkish dead. A terrible panic seized the Moslems, and they fled helter-skelter, hotly pursued by the Christians. No resistance was attempted; flight was their only thought. They dared not surrender to an enemy whom they hats so greatly incensed and for whom they had shown so little consideration. Indeed, the Christians would have made them no offer of peace, so intense was their indignation. From the Emperor down to the lowest man in the ranks they fought so

continuously and so unweariedly that they had no time to think of making such an offer, to say nothing of negotiating a treaty.

The Turks at last opened the gates to secure their liberty and life, and out they poured, with the Sultan at their head, eager to escape. When they reached the camp of the Christians they gave vent to their rage by slaying the sick and non-combatants. Our young friends suddenly found themselves surrounded by furious Moslems swinging their scymitars over their unprotected heads. Faithful to his trust their caretaker sought to defend them, but fell in the unequal contest, and the same fate seemed to threaten them. A muscular, sun-browned hand was already directing a blow at Raymond's head with a blood-stained scymitar, but the blow was averted by a sudden order. The enemies conversed in a language the brothers did not understand, with the result that their lives were spared, although they were dragged away in spite of all resistance. They were placed upon light, fleet horses, and, guarded by a strong band of the enemy, left the camp, fleeing afar with the wind's speed, they knew not whither.

They soon discovered that they had fallen into the hands of the Sultan, and that it was he who had rescued them from instant death. But alas! they feared that they had only been spared to gratify his revenge by some painful mode of torture. At the same time it did not escape their notice how carefully they were guarded from any possibility of danger, and that great consideration was paid to the wounded brother. They could not account for this, nor could they reconcile such solicitude with the malicious expression of the Sultan's face whenever he looked at them. After a short halt, during which the prisoners got some rest, they went on. Though the night was very dark, Raymond noticed that their way led through ravines and narrow defiles like those in which the Christians had suffered so many disasters. He had hoped to return that way after the war was over, but, alas! how cruelly was he disappointed! They were defenceless prisoners in the hands of an enemy who knew no pity, who blindly followed his relentless rage, and was preparing to take their lives in the most barbarous manner as an expiation for the thousands who had been slain by the Christians.

Ready as he was to sacrifice his life for Christ and His holy religion, Raymond would rather have fallen, weapons in hand, fighting with the infidels, the arch-enemies of Christianity, than perish by torture. How he lamented the fatality of his wounded arm! His effort to protect his father's life had been in vain, and now he was a helpless prisoner. His mind was filled with sad reflections in the stillness of the night, broken only by the hoof-beats of the horses.

The increasing coolness and light gray streaks in the sky announced the approach of morning, and as it gradually dawned he felt somewhat less anxious. The same horde surrounded him, the same browned faces scowled at him; but he could see the dear face of his brother, and he felt cheered by his unwavering reliance upon the will of God. This was a great consolation, and they enjoyed it with all the ardor of innocent souls. God's glorious nature lay spread out before them, bathed in the morning radiance. Millions of dewdrops glistened on the grass. The flowers, refreshed by the moisture, exhaled delicious fragrance, and thousands of the gentle singers of the wood proclaimed their joy in song. When tears of sadness came to their eyes at times, as they reflected that the birds could enjoy a happiness denied to them, they found consolation in the thought that God cared for all his creatures, and that He would not forget them. "Not a sparrow falls from the roof without the will of the Heavenly Father," say the Scriptures. "It is God's will that we suffer. It is in accordance with His plans, and we must submit. When His wise purpose is accomplished, He will send us help." Thus Raymond consoled his beloved brother.

The cool morning wind, which hardly stirred the tree boughs, occasionally brought a peculiar roar to their ears. Now it sounded strong, again weak; at times it entirely ceased, and then was loud again. The brothers thought it must come from some distant spot at the end of their journey. They strained their eyes to find it, but as soon as their guards saw them doing this, they bandaged their eyes. During the brief delay occasioned by this, they noticed that the leader gave one of his attendants an order, and that the latter hastily left in the opposite direction.

The march was at once resumed. It was not long before the roar grew stronger. The brothers were convinced it was the noise of waves breaking right and left along their way. “The sea,” thought Raymond; “we are by the sea, and no longer in the interior of the enemy’s country.”

Soon the horses clattered over a bridge and halted in a spacious courtyard. The bandages were removed, and the brothers found themselves in a narrow space inclosed by high walls. Nothing could be seen around them, but the beautiful clear blue sky seemed to say, “Despair not! God is watching over you.” They embraced each other and heart to heart wept tears of sorrow and joy—of sorrow over the death of their beloved father, of joy that they still had each other and loved each other so faithfully. Their joy was short-lived, however, for they were soon led into a solitary room and confined securely like ordinary prisoners.

They saw nothing of their enemy that day. A grinning slave silently brought their simple food, and after a time as silently carried away the dishes. It seemed to the brothers that he was a mute, he manifested so little interest in their conversation.

The prisoners naturally talked much about their unfortunate plight,—what the Emperor would think, and what great anxiety their absence would cause him.. At one moment they hoped he would rescue them, but at the next they feared he might be so occupied with his great undertaking that he would find neither time nor opportunity to come to their help. Possibly he might even forget them in the wild tumult of war raging about him. How could he be expected to think of their lives when the lives of so many thousands depended upon his activity? If their father were only living, he would either attempt their rescue himself or induce the Emperor to undertake it. The sad thought brought tears to their eyes again.

After considering their situation from every point of view, they continued to repose their trust in God, who has so many agencies for the accomplishment of His purposes. This reconciled them to the thought of dying for the religion of Christ. Indeed, it seemed to them now as glorious to sacrifice

their lives within prison walls as upon the battlefield. They shed tears less often; their lips no longer uttered laments.

Thus the time passed for several days, but at length the Sultan suddenly entered the room. They instantly realized that they were not regarded as ordinary prisoners. The Sultan inquired if there was anything they needed, but they made no complaints. He expected to see them at his feet, deploring their situation, but he heard no request for mitigation of their imprisonment, for better food, or for the enjoyment of fresh air. They were quiet and calm in his presence. Every trace of sorrow had disappeared from their faces, and confidence and courage shone in their eyes. The Sultan stood before them, astonished at their bearing. At last, with scornful look and menacing voice, he said:

“Your death will follow the slightest attempt you make to escape, or which your Emperor shall make to rescue you.”

“We shall make no attempt to escape, for it is impossible,” said Raymond, “but we cannot prevent the Emperor from doing what he thinks is right. If you kill us, we will die joyfully.”

“But that will not be necessary, if your protector, the Emperor, keeps his word as faithfully as they say he does.”

“He always keeps his word, whatever malicious tongues may say to the contrary.”

“Why, then, does he delay keeping it in your case?”

“How do you know he has given his word to us?”

“Oho! you innocent doves! On the very spot where your father died, and where you (pointing to Raymond) killed one of my bravest, I heard him say, ‘I will care for thy sons as if they were my own, and I will pledge my life for them.’”

“And he will do what he said. He will keep his word, but he has hardly had time to hear of our capture.”

He knows it well enough, but he will not keep his word.”

“That is false.”

Don’t be so hasty! Listen. I have sent word to him by one of my most trusty messengers that you are in my hands and that I will kill you if he attacks my castle. In addition to this, I offered to release you if he would make peace and quit the country. And what was his reply?”

“He has considered your proposition, and rejects it.”

“You have guessed right; and yet by doing as he has done, he has put your lives in danger. He has been faithless.”

“He esteems honor—without which one cannot be a knight—higher than life. Will he, the greatest sovereign on earth, whose long life is one series of heroic acts such as have rarely been performed in this world, before whom Europe and Asia tremble, will he forget his imperial duty and prove himself guilty in his old age of such a cowardly act as you expect from him? No, never! The world would point its finger of scorn at him, and those who were slain in executing his designs would rise up and say, ‘Thou hast deliberately sacrificed us at the close of thy victorious career; thou hast thrown away all that thou hast purchased with our blood.’”

The Sultan, astonished at these words, replied: “It is true the Emperor promised to free Palestine; but he also promised to protect you, and his obstinacy consigns you to death.”

“We will die willingly when the time comes. What we expected in battle we will not fly from in prison, if God so wills. The Emperor knows our feelings, and if he shall leave us to our fate, that will be because he is engaged in carrying out a higher purpose.”

“Perhaps if you remind him of his pledge he will recall the services of your father and accede to my demands. Write to him, and a trusty messenger shall take your letter to him.”

“Never! It would be disgraceful for us to do it. We would rather die a thousand times.”

Seeing that his efforts were fruitless, the Sultan contemptuously left the apartment. The brothers now realized their importance in the eyes of the enemy, and were satisfied

that their noble father would have approved what they had done.

The Brothers' Ordeal

EVENING HAD HARDLY FALLEN when the Sultan again suddenly appeared in the brothers' room. He entered noiselessly and regarded the two with a malicious expression, as they stood arm in arm at the window gazing at the glorious sunset, which seemed to them a reflection of the infinite father-love of God and awakened filial devotion for Him in their hearts.

Their fearlessness surprised the Sultan. He had hoped to find them downcast, and expected they would tremble before him and prostrate themselves at his feet. But nothing of this kind occurred. They merely glanced at the intruder, then turned their heads away and resumed their contemplation of the sunset, as if he were some insignificant person.

"Look at the brilliant red which illuminates half the sky," said Raymond, gently.

"We see this every day and yet every day it gives us the same delight," replied his brother. "How many times we have seen it with father and mother from the windows of our castle! And it was just as beautiful there as here."

"That is because it is the work of the almighty and all-gracious God, who has the same love for all His earthly children. He overlooks none of them. He cares alike for all, and although the needs of His creatures are so different, yet He knows what each one wants, and from His endless bounty He can satisfy all."

"And does He also think of us?" asked Conrad.

"How canst thou ask such a question? Certainly He does, foolish boy! He is everywhere, and of course He is here. As He watches over all He of course sees our condition and will help us in His own good time."

"Why, Raymond, you do not actually believe I doubt what you say! I was only eager that this imprisonment might soon end,

so that thy wounded arm might heal more quickly under the care of our Christian brethren."

"Your liberty is in your own hands," interposed the Sultan. "Like two young fools, you have rejected my proposal. Now I will renew it—write to the Emperor."

"Not one word," replied Raymond. "We have given you our answer, and we do not change our minds like smooth-tongued Greeks and Turks."

The Sultan restrained his anger at the reproach hurled at him, and addressed Conrad:

Be more reasonable than your insolent brother. You are young yet, but you know it is a sin against God to shorten life. The Emperor will be forced to free you. Write to him yourself."

"I well know it is a crime to take one's own life, but it is also a crime to preserve that life by a shameful deed. It would be the grossest offence to induce the Emperor to abandon his high purposes by my appeals for liberty. I refuse your request, as my brother has done."

Wild rage flamed in the Sultan's eye, and his face was distorted with unrestrained anger.

"Well," he roared, "be it so! You shall now feel my power. I have foolishly been considerate of your youth, but shall be so no longer. You must die,—that is a matter of course. But death will be too mild a punishment for you. You have dared to defy me, me whom millions obey! You shall now suffer all that your brethren, the Christian dogs, have suffered. I will inflict hunger, thirst, punishments of every kind. I will devise tortures more painful than any one before has ever imagined. While you are enduring them your cries of agony will sound like heavenly music in my ears. When you supplicate for mercy there shall be no respite. The time will have passed then for securing what I offer now."

With trembling voice but not from fear—Conrad replied: "We have hitherto considered you an honorable enemy. We do not complain because you securely imprison us, but to treat us as

you have threatened to do lowers you to the level of the savage beast."

The Sultan somewhat regained his composure, and left the room speechless from amazement at their boldness.

The brothers again embraced, unmoved by his horrible threat, and determined with God's help to remain steadfast and not to deviate a finger's breadth from the path of right and duty.

Their conversation was now disturbed by a swarthy visaged person looking in at the door and grimacing. He was a gigantic Turk, who signified by gesture rather than by speech that they were to follow him. They were a little alarmed at first, but a glance at each other and a mutual grasp of the hand reassured them, and they courageously followed him. Their apprehensions, however, were not realized. They were simply changing the place of their confinement. A low, dark room with small iron-grated windows and bare walls, and destitute of the customary furniture it was, where they were now to spend their time. The slave left some wretched food, and so slight an allowance of it that it barely sufficed to relieve the pangs of hunger. They realized by his conduct that he was their new keeper.

The change in their situation made little impression upon them. The slave had hardly left the room before they fell upon their knees, thanked God that so far He had kept them from yielding, and fervently prayed that He would continue to aid them and save them from any severer trials.

Several days passed without affording them a sight of their enemies. The miserable food did not allay the cravings of hunger. The moisture trickling down the walls, the damp, sticky atmosphere, and the lack of refreshing rest nearly made them ill. The slave's face manifested not a sign of pity. On the contrary, the brothers thought they noticed an expression of malicious satisfaction whenever their eyes met his; but they made no complaint.

One day, to their great astonishment, their keeper, who seemed to have forgotten them, entered the room bringing dainty food instead of the usual prison fare. A hot rice soup steamed from

a clean dish, regaling the senses and tempting the appetite. The slave's conduct was also different. A look of sympathy had taken the place of his scornful smile. He invited them to partake of the food, and placed it before them himself, in the most friendly manner, for they were afraid to take it, suspecting that it was only offered to them in malicious mockery. But when he went out and returned with a pair of roasted fowls, they no longer distrusted him or hesitated to accept his repeated invitations.

The slave waited upon the table with as much ceremony as if he were serving distinguished company, now helping one, then the other, and urging both to take more. They ate with gratitude to God for making such a change in their master's heart, but made no conversation with the servant, though he evidently was expecting them to do so. Indeed, the meal closed without a word from them, though the Turk coughed and hemmed and made every sort of hint to them, hoping they would speak. At last he withdrew, but speedily returned with a tankard. "Here is something to warm Christian hearts," he said with a smile, as if confident they would at last break their silence.

"Wine?" said Conrad. "I thought the Turks did not drink wine. What does the Sultan mean?"

Though Conrad was only speaking to his brother, the servant answered: "The Sultan? This wine is not from him. It is from Rustan, your servant, young gentlemen."

"Do you mean you have done this without the Sultan's knowledge?"

"As sure as I am Rustan. But, by Allah, the Sultan does not and must not know a word of it."

The boys looked at each other in amazement.

"Do not be alarmed, dear young gentlemen," said Rustan. "You shall know all. Look you! old Rustan loves the Christians though he is a Mussulman. When I was a young man I bravely fought them, for I was incited by the dervishes, the bloodthirsty enemies of your faith. I was wounded, taken prisoner, and nursed by a Christian in his home. I have never

forgotten it. I have never fought against them since. Fate brought me to this castle and made me your keeper. The Sultan forced me to treat you harshly. It broke my heart to see you suffering, and I have improved the first opportunity to make you some amends."

Both the brothers were greatly moved by his story, and believed they were doing right to accept his proffer.

"Now, drink," said the Turk. "It is pure Cyprus, which, as I have heard, is much esteemed by the Franks."

After considerable persuasion the prisoners drank, and the excellent, strong wine refreshed them. Rustan urged them to take some more, but they declined. They restrained their desires as usual, for they well knew that much wine was not wholesome for those so young. They were satisfied with what was reasonable, and this had always been the habit of their lives.

Rustan improved his opportunity, and while repeatedly lamenting their hard lot, he informed them they must attempt to free themselves, for they could expect no mercy from the Sultan, who had sworn by the beard of the Prophet to punish their insolence. "No Mussulman, least of all Kilidj Arslan, ever breaks this oath," said he; "therefore, fly!"

"That is easier said than done," replied Raymond, "and you, Rustan, know even better than we do how impossible it is to escape from here."

"I will find the way for you. Like you, I suffered greatly before you came. Then, as your keeper, I was forced to be cruel to you. My old head cannot invent cruelties, and my back has to suffer for it. I have had enough of cruelty; I will escape with you. Come and see."

Rustan took the boys by the hands and led them quietly down a long corridor. They followed him involuntarily, but without a tremor. At last they came to a door opening upon a handsome apartment with a gorgeous tapestry dividing it in the centre. Behind it the Sultan was soundly sleeping upon silken cushions with curtains undrawn.

“You see escape is possible. The tyrant who tortures you and me is fast asleep. He will not be awakened, for woe to him who disturbs his rest. The castle garrison is an insignificant one. I know all the passages and have the keys of the gate leading to the causeway. Put on Turkish costumes, and in a trice you will be out, and we will fly to the Emperor’s camp.”

The temptation to escape came so suddenly that the boys were inclined to yield to it.

“And yet,” said Rustan, “we are not absolutely safe even when the tyrant sleeps. When he wakes, his first question will be about you, for even in sleep he dreams of you and is busy devising new tortures. So, if you would be absolutely safe, take this dagger and thrust it into the heart of your torturer.”

With these words he placed a sharp, polished dagger into the hand of each of the boys in spite of their resistance. All at once they felt these glittering but fearful weapons in their hands. To secure their liberty they must make no noise, scarce venture a word of reply, to say nothing of dropping the daggers. Their dangerous situation alarmed them. They would rather have remained in their gloomy prison. Rustan, however, was both deaf and blind to their evident signs of abhorrence of such a shameful deed. They attempted to leave the apartment but he prevented them.

“You shall not leave here until you have disposed of that tyrant’s accursed life. I supposed you were brave sons of a brave father,” he craftily whispered, “but you are cowards, and incapable of bold deeds. As I will not return to the yoke of the slave or die a miserable death with you, when we are discovered, I will risk it alone.” Drawing a dagger, he advanced upon the sleeping Sultan with the intention of stabbing him, but Raymond rushed between them and said:

“It is not the custom of knights to kill a sleeping, defenceless enemy. We will fight for our liberty with the same weapons, man to man. You shall reach him only over our dead bodies.”

“Awake!” cried Conrad, vigorously shaking the Sultan. “Awake! your life is in danger. An assassin threatens you. Take this dagger and protect yourself.”

The Sultan roused up. Raymond was still holding Rustan's dagger arm and with his wounded arm holding his own dagger at his heart, while Conrad was standing in a threatening attitude by the side of the Sultan and looking at the assassin with blazing eyes.

"Keep these daggers as souvenirs from me," said the awakened Sultan. "I shall not forget this hour. I have heard and seen all. You are brave and honest boys, and have well stood the test I arranged. From now on you will be released from prison; but I cannot give you your liberty, because I must avail myself of every agency to make a lasting peace with your Emperor. But I will treat you as my sons."

The Sultan then left the apartment, which was next to his own, so that it might be put in order for them, and that they should be near him. Rustan, who had played his role so masterfully, was again the Sultan's old faithful servant, and as such was doubly dear to the boys.

Life was now far different. Many would have highly enjoyed it, and felt happy amid such good living, handsome surroundings, and abundance of everything, and have soon forgotten their old conditions. But it was not so with the brothers. They could hardly forget the Emperor for a moment, and they nearly always spoke of him when they were alone. Their desire for liberty was still strong, and though they scorned to secure it by such a horrible deed as murder, yet they would have followed Rustan's lead if he could have freed them in any way but that. They were convinced that their steadfastness in the right course would result in greater advantage to them, as well as to the Christian army, than an act of murder when they were still too young and inexperienced to unravel the web of the cunning Turk and see through his plans. They had earned his respect—the respect of an enemy second to none in the world. Since he respected them, he certainly would respect the knights and, above all, the Emperor, for he was the ideal of all knightly virtues.

What might have been their fate if, urged on by the unchristian thirst for revenge, and forgetful of their duty, they had attempted to use the murderous steel? Both Rustan and the

Sultan would have confronted them, and against two such foes two weak boys would have been powerless. Even if they had overcome them and secured their liberty, the deed would not have been approved in the camp, and they would have been held in contempt all their lives. Though their noble course was unknown to the Emperor and Christendom, though it dissipated their hope of rescue, and they might have to pass their young lives in a lonesome castle, there was One who had seen their act and had tested their hearts. God would not let it pass unrequited.

The Emperor to the Rescue

WE LEFT THE EMPEROR fighting furiously in the streets of Iconium. Where the danger was greatest he fought with the bravery always characteristic of him. None could withstand him. They either fell before his vigorous attacks, or fled as fast and far as their feet could take them. The Christians were equally bold even when the Turks assailed them with the fierceness of lions. Their bitter resentment over broken faith, their remembrance of the sufferings they had undergone, the thought of so many fallen comrades, and their unwavering belief that the destruction of the enemies of Christianity was pleasing to God, inflamed them to a pitch of fury that extinguished every spark of humanity. They did not desist until every turban wearer was killed or, like the Sultan, fortunate enough to make his escape. The Emperor was one of the last to sheathe his reddened sword. Many fell utterly exhausted, for in the excitement of the battle they had not noticed their waning strength.

The foot-soldiers, who had driven stakes into the ground to protect themselves from the enemy's cavalry charges, were hardly able to move. In addition to an immense amount of spoils and the wealth of the city, they secured an abundance of subsistence. All who were able procured enough for themselves and for the needs of their exhausted comrades.

After the Emperor's work was complete, and in the midst of his exultation over his victory and the fruits of his conquest of the city, he first learned what he had lost in the meantime. He could hardly trust his ears when he was informed of the capture of his wards. After repeated assurances that the news was true, and that their faithful caretaker had been found dead, the Emperor's cheeks paled and his flashing eyes dimmed, for he realized at once the impending fate of the unfortunate lads.

"You could not have struck me a harder blow than this, cruel Sultan," he said, grimly. "You were cunning enough to know how dear those boys are to me. A fine proof of your courage

this is, you coward, who shun open battle face to face, who can only succeed with overwhelming numbers, who lie in wait and strike your foeman in the back!"

The glory of his victory was dimmed for him. The spoils he had won lost all their value in his eyes. This was no more than he had often done. But how should he redeem his knightly word, which never yet had been broken? He had allowed himself to be deceived by a subtle enemy, to whom he had exposed the boys, fancying them secure even when not under his watchful eye, and the result might be fatal to those who had trusted to his protection.

His associates vainly tried to convince him he had not been guilty of any neglect of duty. Empty words could not comfort him. "It has all happened because of my negligence," he replied. His first move was to order immediate pursuit of the enemy, in the hope of rescuing the boys.

The most devoted of his knights mounted steeds they had captured, and set off in pursuit of the fugitives, believing that the latter, after the long day's battle, could not have gone any considerable distance. They returned shortly, however, bringing with them a messenger sent by the Sultan to the Emperor. He was at once taken before him, and announced that the two boys were in the Sultan's power, and that the latter well knew how dear the sons of the Emperor's old friend were to him, as well as the promise he had made to that friend in his dying moments. He further announced that the Sultan would engage to return them if the Emperor would give up the spoils he had captured, as well as the Sultan's possessions. If the Emperor refused the proposal, the boys should die in the strong castle by the sea the moment he attacked it.

The messenger's announcement caused general astonishment. When the first shock of the blow had passed, however, the Emperor's eyes gleamed with exultant determination. His very soul revolted against such a proposal, and his anger against the Sultan for expecting him to accede to it was furious.

"Tell your prince," he exclaimed in thunder tones, "tell your prince I spurn his proposal. My imperial honor will not allow me to release my wards in such a manner. By God's grace, I

will keep my word, but I will not surrender the fruits of a victory purchased with the blood of thousands. No! with God's help, I will find some way to redeem my promise becoming to a hero and an Emperor. Tell the Sultan I will hold him responsible with his head for the safety of my boys."

With these words the Emperor turned his back upon the messenger. All present applauded the reply of the old hero. Though none had believed he would accept the Sultan's terms, they had thought it possible that the Emperor might open negotiations, and, if possible, reach a settlement without bloodshed. They feared any such arrangement, as it would only secure them a fickle-minded and unreliable friend; and should conditions arise at any time like those they had found in their dealings with the Greeks, they would never be certain whether he was their friend or their enemy. Every step they took would be hindered, and their plans might be entirely frustrated. But since the Emperor had replied in such a decisive manner, and the messenger's departure from the city would end all negotiations, they knew to a certainty that they now had to deal with an enemy.

The Germans remained in Iconium an entire week. The houses were filled with wounded who had to be cared for, and this duty was all the more imperative because of the lack of doctors. The knights and their attendants were so well skilled in the treatment of wounds that they were of great service; but in the cases of those who had been overcome by their strenuous exertions, and weakened for want of proper food, the wounds were exceedingly dangerous; and, besides, the danger was aggravated by the heat. The natives could not be trusted; hence every one had to depend upon the love of his Christian neighbor; and if ever this most beautiful doctrine of Christianity was practised, it was there. Proud knights who governed hundreds at home, cared for all their faithful attendants, even for the sons of the lowest of their vassals; and sometimes those who had been accustomed to wealth and splendor, and perhaps had been hard rulers, waited upon the meanly born. Again, some knight nursed another of equal station who, before they espoused the cause of the Cross, had been his mortal enemy and might then have been attacking

him or burning his castle, had they not ceased their strife to go to the rescue of Christians in the Orient. Such were the extraordinary scenes among these warriors whose swords were still red with Turkish blood. But a moment ago they were fierce as lions and tigers; now they were as gentle as lambs.

The Emperor was omnipresent. He had room in his heart for every one in his service. He consoled many an old comrade lying on his bed of pain. He closed many an eye which had watched for him and with him. He held many a cold hand which had wielded the sword for him, and tears of sympathy often came to his eyes. Then he turned to the well who were enjoying rest in the plazas and streets of the city, and cleaning their weapons and armor; or he visited the sentinels on the walls to see if they were faithful to their duties. While there, his eyes involuntarily turned to the spot where he thought the castle stood in which his boys were prisoners. Notwithstanding they were far away, he strained his eyes as if to find out their condition and to read in their faces whether they still confided in him, or whether, like their present master, they doubted his word.

The Emperor gave long consideration to the means at his command for effecting their rescue, but none of them appeared practicable. One thing was certain. If an attack were made upon his really impregnable castle the Sultan would carry out his threat. Then again of what use would it be to capture the castle, even if it were possible? They could not catch the Sultan and bring him to account so long as they could not cut off his escape by sea. As for negotiation, the Emperor gave it no thought. He was certain that the Sultan would not make a second offer; and even if he found that the Emperor was willing to listen, he felt sure that he not only would repeat the old demands but probably would add new and not less ignominious ones.

From every point of view the deed was almost superhuman. The castle could be approached only by land, over a narrow causeway, which was in plain sight and could be easily defended. But even if they crossed it without resistance, they would come to portcullises which could be easily lowered so as to cut them off and ensure their destruction. Seawards a

large inclosure was filled with most trustworthy guards—a number of huge and powerful lions, tigers, and panthers, whose loud roars were terrible enough to prevent any one from attempting to scale the wall on that side. But even supposing a knight were found ready to attempt this rash exploit, what could be accomplished? Could he rescue the boys from the Sultan and escape with them past the castle garrison? And if he failed what would become of the Emperor's promise? Would he have risked his life for them as he agreed? He would have done no more than any other might have done and the faithless Turk would have laughed at him for his pains. Frederick's honor had thus far been unquestioned. His word was of more worth than gold. He could not escape the conclusion that to uphold his honor to the last he must undertake the deed alone.

This thought flashed through his mind like the lightning. A knight in every sense of the word, as his whole life had shown, Frederick had all the virtues of true knighthood in their highest development. In his time knighthood was not satisfied with ordinary dangers. It sought for daring exploits, and purposely invited and magnified them that victory might be all the more glorious. It was regarded as a misfortune that the world no longer swarmed with dragons and serpents, with which, according to the legends, the heroes of the olden time contended. Giants and goblins had also disappeared, and the knightly heroes therefore eagerly seized the opportunity to encounter dangers in the Orient they had never faced before, and to overcome them and thereby display their knighthood as well as their religious enthusiasm.

No exploit more dangerous than that which Frederick decided to perform could have been conceived. He industriously made plans to reach the Sultan, rejecting this and that, until but one remained. He must risk that, and no other. But in the meantime how could he attend to his other duties? His army certainly was safe from any immediate attack by the Turks. But did the Sultan actually expect that his proposal would be accepted? Probably, otherwise he would have been more actively engaged. But what would happen in case he, the Emperor, failed in this dangerous undertaking? In that case, if his army

were attacked, his name would no longer be a terror to the enemy, and still, with so many valiant knights in the army, it would not lack for a leader. His son, inheritor of his name and his virtues, now in the very flower of youthful strength and courage, would lead it to victory, with God's help, as he had clone.

The evening star was shining serenely on the horizon when the Emperor completed his plans. He determined there should be no further delay. What was to be done must be done quickly. He went to his son, Frederick of Swabia, frankly laid his plans before him, assigned him to the chief command of the army, and requested him to keep his absence a secret, so that it should not have a disquieting effect upon the army. If he did not return in three days he instructed him to attack the Turkish castle by the sea with all his strength, and look for him there.

Night had enveloped the city in thick darkness when the Emperor, disguised in plain costume, passed through the gate leading to the south. With his armor and cloak securely packed upon his horse, he rode through the ranks of the sleeping army. Now and then a sentinel challenged him, but he was not halted as he well knew the watchword. He had very wisely selected one of those horses which could be relied upon to cover a long distance in a short time, and which in battle were accustomed to carry heavy armor in case their riders were exhausted.

Reaching the open country, the noble animal flew along with the ease and speed characteristic of Oriental steeds. There was no obstruction in his way, no enemy in sight. They seemed to have vanished as completely as if the wind had swept them away. His way now stretched over luxurious grassy plains, now through gloomy mountain forests. Many miles lay behind him, but his steed seemed as fresh as at the start, and the Emperor himself was but little wearied. The fresh night air, the pleasure of the ride, and the thought that at last he would redeem his word inspired him with more enthusiasm than he had felt at any time since the loss of the boys. He rode to face danger as exultantly as if he were faring to a tournament.

In the early gray of the morning the Emperor came to a solitary fisherman's hut, which showed no sign of life within.

Evidently it was either deserted or its owner was sleeping. He was now sure he was in the vicinity of the castle. He knocked at the door and waited long for admission. He soon grew impatient and had just decided to break down the weak door and wait inside until daylight; or if he found the occupant had been afraid to open it, to take him along as a guide. A person looked out of the little window, but instantly drew back as if in fear when he saw the knight. Frederick espied him and demanded admission.

After considerable delay the fisherman opened the door. He suddenly appeared to have recovered from his fright, for he received the knight very hospitably, brought him food, placed it upon the table, and begged his guest to partake. “I would gladly offer you more, brave knight; but I am poor, and this is all I have.”

“Make no excuses, my good man,” replied Frederick. I am not so satiated that I need to have luxuries. I have been living on simple fare for several days, and have become quite accustomed to it.”

“Are the Christians reduced to their old straits again?” asked the fisherman.

“Yes, thanks to the Greeks and Turks. They have proved alike unfaithful. Your Greek Christians have broken their word again, and would have been open enemies had they not been afraid of the brave Germans. Your master, the Sultan, has been worse than any of them.”

“But his subjects ought not to be held responsible for his offences. They say your Emperor is a powerful sovereign, but mild and conciliatory also.”

“If you had been with him daily you could not have described him more accurately, but neither your people nor your Sultan should presume upon his gentle disposition too far. It has bounds. The entire country is now subdued. The enemy has fled, and the Sultan has taken refuge in his castle by the sea. Tell me, do you know anything about that place?”

“Oh, yes, Sir Knight, I can inform you about it if you wish to know. Come here! Look! there are its walls with towers

overtopping them. You can recognize them though it is not yet day. The Sultan is staying there now."

"Alone?"

"No, oh, no! The garrison is not strong, but the castle is by no means empty. I will tell you, but in confidence, that the Sultan keeps two boy-prisoners there who are very dear to the Emperor."

"Have you seen them?" said the Emperor, with much excitement.

Not yet; but I heard of them when I was there selling fish."

"Ah!" said the Emperor, with an air of indifference, not wishing to betray himself, for he observed that the fisherman was watching him curiously. "Does the Sultan keep no guards about him because he has no fear that the Emperor will attack him?"

"Oh, sir, he is safe against all the armies in the world! I ought not to reveal this to you, for the Sultan is my master; but believe me, I have so much respect for your Emperor that I am willing to do him or one of his knights a service. The castle is strongly protected. It cannot be taken from the land side, and seawards it is skirted by an inclosure filled with savage beasts. Oh, sir! I have now and then seen those cruel animals from a distance, and been terribly frightened by their dreadful roars. When I have seen them spring upon one another in mighty leaps, though they were only in sport, it has scared me so that I have seized my oars and rowed far from the spot."

"You timorous hare! Do you suppose a German knight fears to go among those beasts?"

The fisherman stared at the knight in astonishment. "For God's sake, Sir Knight, do not think of going there. No prisoner who has tried to escape that way has ever come out alive. They could hardly find his bones in the morning, and sometimes only a few blood spots told the story of his awful death."

"But how can a prisoner get in there?"

"Near the centre of the enclosure there is a door which remains closed, but unlocked, day and night. A passage from it leads to

the lion tower where the prisoners are. You can see it rising from the centre of the castle. They say that the guards sometimes pay no attention to their prisoners, because they know that if they seek to escape through this passage they will meet an awful death."

The Emperor's blood ran cold as the thought occurred to him that the Sultan might take the same course with the boys, but he quickly regained his composure.

"Promise me, Sir Knight, not to throw away your life there."

"Fool, where did you get that idea? If I wished to go there I should not hesitate, for I should expect to succeed; but I don't know that I have any interest over there. Find me a quiet little place where I can sleep a few hours."

The fisherman promptly replied: "No one will disturb you here, for no one else lives here. Lie down anywhere and rest. I am going to look for firewood, and shall not be back until it is time to get dinner."

"Many thanks to you, but go as soon as you can, so that I can sleep."

Barbarossa's Victory and Death

THE EMPEROR THOROUGHLY UNDERSTOOD the friendly solicitude of his host. He had had large experience with Greek treachery in little as well as in great affairs. He was well aware that their greed and their hatred of the Western Christians would lead them to work against him at every opportunity. It was easy enough to protect himself against the fisherman's hostile designs by killing him or by putting him in safe custody until his work was accomplished, but he regarded such action as ungrateful, cowardly, and vile. He knew also that he could purchase the man's faithfulness, but he would not debase himself so far as to redeem his pledge by the use of gold. He must rely, therefore, upon his own resources. He decided to make no further concealment of his purpose, but at the same time to be cautious about revealing his identity. He would defeat any treacherous act the fisherman might he contemplating, by prompt action, and at the same time astonish his enemy by the boldness of his exploit, whether he succeeded or perished in the attempt. He quickly made his plan and lost no time in putting it into execution, for the moment was favorable.

Quickly donning his armor, helmet, and cloak, he stepped out of the hut. A little boat was dancing on the gentle waves, and a light wind was blowing toward the castle. "Everything is propitious," he said to himself, delightedly; "now to my work with God's help." He sprang into the boat, seized the oar, and rowed as deftly as if he were an oarsman by occupation.

The sun was already high and beat down upon our seaman scorchingly. Great drops of perspiration ran down his face, for he was unused to the work, and his armor made it all the more laborious; but he did not lessen his efforts. Now and then he would let the boat glide along of its own motion, and then, resuming the oar, send it ahead with still more vigorous strokes.

Gradually he neared the castle, which seemed to emerge from the waves of the sea in all its hugeness of outline. Looking up, he surveyed the imposing and colossal work of human industry. With practised eye he estimated the strength and height of towers and walls, as well as the size of the enclosure, and tried to ascertain the exact locality of the door leading from it. The sight before him and the magnitude of the task, which seemed to transcend human ability, might well have induced him to abandon his attempt; but a voice within him said: “Thy pledged word is sacred. Duty calls thee. It is no time for fear or doubt. Courage and presence of mind alone will aid thee.” He studied the situation and planned out his method of attack with the same coolness and composure that characterized him when laying out his movements on the battlefield. His hand had not trembled, his heart had not wavered in a hundred battles. It beat undauntedly when all seemed lost at Legnano, and in many a desperate battle with the Turks. Why, then, should it beat less resolutely in a contest which must decide in a moment whether victory or death was to be his fate?

It was a little past midday when our hero reached the castle. The beasts at that time should have been in deep sleep, but to his astonishment they were restlessly moving about. From time to time they ran growling toward the centre of the enclosure as if pursued by some stronger animal. Then they would go back to their resting-places, but without showing any disposition to sleep. Then, yawning frightfully and eagerly licking their lips, they would spring up and rush about again with wildly gleaming eyes.

The Emperor had not expected such conduct from the beasts, and the thought occurred to him, Is it due to something besides mere chance? Has the fisherman actually carried out his treacherous design? It seemed likely to him. He had to admit to himself that the danger arising from such a consideration might prove fatal; but even were it so, he decided to carry out the plan which he had fixed upon, as the best under the circumstances.

He approached the sea-washed wall as noiselessly as he could, so as not to attract the attention of the beasts. Bending low, he

drove the boat ahead with short, quick strokes until he reached it; then, laying down his oar, he examined his sword and dagger, fastened his cloak loosely about his broad shoulders, clutched the rail running along the wall: a step, a spring, and he was up.

Not an instant elapsed before he was in the enclosure, confronting the savage beasts. He realized at the first glance the full extent of his danger, and decided what to do. He discerned the trap-door at once and with drawn sword in his right hand rushed to it. At the same instant the beasts noticed him. The lithe, bloodthirsty monsters emerged from their lairs at once and advanced upon him in swift leaps. A large panther outstripped them all. He reached the Emperor from the left side in two bounds, followed closely by a huge lion from the right. Being still three paces away from the trap-door, a fearful struggle was unavoidable, for either of those terrible animals would have been a formidable foe for one man.

With the quickness of lightning the Emperor plunged his sword into the lion's breast, at the same time tearing his cloak from his shoulders with his left hand and throwing it over the panther's head. The hope of victory shone in the Emperor's face; his most cruel enemy was harmless for the moment. Unopposed by him he advanced to the trap-door in the midst of numerous smaller but hardly less dangerous beasts seeking to pounce upon him, each in his own way. As the Emperor stooped to raise the trap-door, a leopard sprang over him and another was thrown back by the lifting of the trap-door, the panther still being enveloped in the cloak. All this took but an instant, but in that instant the Emperor sprang into a dark passage and the door closed down behind him.

Our hero waited only long enough to make sure that he had securely fastened the door on the inside, for overhead there was a bedlam of roars and growls as if all the beasts of Asia and Africa were loose there. The shrieks and snarls of the smaller mingled with the heavy roars of the larger beasts. Sharp claws scratched on the door, and the animals tore at it and hurled themselves against it so furiously that it seemed as if they would burst it open, and the whole cruel pack fall upon the bold hero.

Victor over the wild animals, he must now prove himself victor over human ones. The Emperor proceeded steadily but cautiously. With sword in hand he tested the floor of the passage lest he should stumble into some pitfall. He also carefully felt the walls to see if there were any side passages from which he might be attacked in the rear. He found none, and at last came to a door. There were several cracks in this door, but not a gleam of daylight penetrated through them. The passage also grew wider. Fearing it might lead under the castle and thence out into the open air again, he calculated the distance from the door in the enclosure to the castle. He was now sure that the second door must open directly into the castle, and the masonry on the right and left confirmed his judgment. With the help of his sword he forced the door open. He advanced a few steps and, to his infinite astonishment, saw the Sultan sitting immediately before him with a numerous and brilliant suite, and the two boys, Raymond and Conrad, on either side of him. Amazement and defiance were visible on every face. The Emperor was overcome with surprise. The silence grew so intense and painful that every one could hear his own heart beat.

The Sultan at last broke the silence: “I bid thee welcome to my castle, thou great hero.”

A heavy burden was lifted from every heart. Anxiety gave way to pleasant anticipation as the Sultan continued:

“Have no fear that I shall abuse the power which thy boldness has given me. I am disarmed, not by terror of thy name, which has made my bravest tremble, but by thine indomitable courage of arm and lofty magnanimity of soul. I will henceforth be thine ally; and as a pledge of my faith I give thee thy dear ones. They are worthy of thee.”

Frederick was deeply moved. His beloved boys fervently embraced him. They called him their rescuer and second father, and then turned and warmly expressed their gratitude to the Sultan. Frederick cordially extended his hand to the generous Turk and the alliance was made.

Thereupon the Sultan joyfully conducted his noble guest to magnificent apartments on the upper floor of the castle, where

everything conducive to his comfort was provided. The servants were ordered to bring the best of food and drink at once. The great rooms of the castle, which had been so empty and desolate, were now full of good cheer. Frederick listened with lively satisfaction to the story of the chivalrous action of the boys; and the Sultan in telling it did not omit to mention his threats and promises and cruel tests. The Emperor closely embraced the boys, and when the Sultan had finished his story, said to them:

"With God's help you have accomplished one of the hardest of tasks. You have secured more respect for the Christian name than I have done with the sword. Henceforth Turks will have a different opinion of us, and this is due to your noble achievement with the simple weapons of Christianity—love of virtue, love of your enemy. God's blessing will rest upon such Christian warriors."

The details of the alliance were soon settled. The Emperor willingly gave up the spoils he had captured, and the Sultan promised to be a faithful ally in the future, to assist the Emperor with troops against Saladin, and to furnish plenty of subsistence. Rustan was ordered to take his swiftest horse, ride to Iconium and carry the joyful news to the army and the citizens. He accomplished his errand with an alacrity which proved how overjoyed he was himself at the happy outcome of the situation.

After a few days the Emperor took leave of his friendly host. Before he left he went to look at the animal enclosure. Holding his boys by the hand, he looked down upon the spot of the terrible encounter, where his first assailant, the huge panther, was now king of the savage pack, for the Emperor had disposed of his predecessor, the lion. The boys looked down apprehensively from their secure position, but the Emperor was exultant over the memories of victory. They repeatedly expressed their gratitude to him, but he only pointed upward, saying that their thanks were due to Him who controls all human destinies.

The three now left the castle upon the fleetest horses in the Sultan's stables, gifts from him to his new friends. Their steeds

flew over the long, narrow causeway toward the spot where the army awaited them. Escorted by a strong guard, they took a shorter route, known to the natives, and were at their journey's end in an incredibly short time.

The towers of Iconium were hardly in sight before the roads were crowded with those who could not wait to welcome the Emperor and tender him their joyful congratulations. The nearer they came to the city the greater was the rejoicing. Shouts and cries of welcome from Christians and Turks alike followed him to his quarters in the city; and when in sight of the army and the whole city he conferred the honor of knighthood upon the two boys, it seemed as if the enthusiastic shouts would never cease, for every one had heard their story from the lips of Rustan.

The Emperor at once resumed his duties. Astonishment mingled with admiration was everywhere aroused as the news of his heroic achievement and the new alliance spread through the country. It also made a deep impression upon Saladin and his army. Frederick decided to secure victory or peace before the enthusiasm of his army and the astonishment of the enemy had subsided. He hoped to win over Saladin also, for he knew he was a nobler enemy than Kilidj Arslan had been. But he was deceived in the expectation that he could accomplish it without a battle. Saladin, perhaps the noblest sovereign in the East since Mohammed's time, besides being high-minded, noble-hearted, and a lover of justice and humanity, was also a very brave and warlike ruler and a devoted follower of the Prophets. He was called the Eastern Barbarossa. Thus far he had fought only against Christians, whom he despised because of their conduct and their faithlessness with each other. He had openly expressed his contempt for the weak Guido of Lusignan, King of Jerusalem, and especially for the Templars and Knights of St. John, who had been treacherous to each other in violation of their vows.

The struggle began as soon as the Christian army entered Syria. They were in position on one side of the insignificant Kalykadnos or Saleph River; on the other side the enemy was awaiting attack. The Christians at once began building a bridge. They were continually harassed by the arrows and

javelins of the enemy, but they did not desist. On the contrary they worked persistently hours at a time.

The old Emperor, however, became impatient. As boldly as if the blood of youth were still coursing in his veins, he plunged into the river and tried to swim to the other shore. But he who had overcome so many dangers, many of them far greater than this, now met his doom. A stroke of apoplexy ended that life so rich in glorious deeds. He had escaped the sharp Lombard dagger, the poisoned Saracen arrow, and the tiger's cruel tooth, to lose his life in the sluggish waters of the river Saleph, the name of which was hardly known beyond its banks.

Words cannot describe the sorrow of the Christian host. With Frederick, an army perished. The world had trembled at his name and the Orient had been terrified by it. Now he who bore this name was a corpse. His once strong arm was powerless. His once bold heart was still. They took him from the water, stark and cold. He would no longer terrify those enemies, who exulted as if they and not the cold waves of the river had killed their great adversary.

After the first shock of sorrow the Christians attacked the enemy with all their power. Frederick of Swabia, the Emperor's son, led them, but after some minor successes, the greater part of them succumbed to the superior numbers of this foe, and the effects of the climate. Of that well-equipped army of ninety-five thousand men only about five thousand were left. Starvation swept away many of those who escaped the Turkish scymitars, and those who escaped both fell victims to strange malignant diseases and lack of care. The Templars and the Knights of St. John had many hospitals, which they had built and which were maintained by contributions from all over Europe; but they never asked the sick if they were Christians, but if they were Englishmen or Frenchmen. The Germans were not received. Many a German heart at home was touched with pity at the unspeakable suffering of so many of their people, and was filled with indignation, at such unchristian conduct; others busily engaged themselves in plans for relief. The merchants of Bremen gave the sails of their vessels to be made into tents for the sick Germans. Knights who had been in life-long struggle with the Saracens closed

their glorious careers by imitating the example of the merciful Samaritan. They organized an order for the care of the sick, similar to those of the Templars and the Knights of St. John. Only Germans were permitted to become members, but its charitable ministrations were offered to all nationalities. Frederick of Swabia gladly gave his assent to the pious work and did his utmost to secure its recognition by the Pope, as well as by his brother, King Henry of Germany; but he did not live to see the work completed. He was a victim of that deadly pestilence which swept away so many thousands.

Our young friends, who survived all the perils of that unfortunate crusade and had wept at the grave of the heroic Emperor, now mourned for his great-hearted son. They deemed it their highest honor to enter the Teutonic order and in its service to perform the two great Christian duties:

To strive for the doctrines of Christ; and

To obey his highest command, “Love one another.”